

NEW YORK Saturday Journal A POPULAR PAPER PICKSURE & PLEASURE

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Vol. III.

E. F. Beadle,
William Adams, } PUBLISHERS.
David Adams.

NEW YORK, OCTOBER 26, 1872.

TERMS IN ADVANCE

One copy, four months, \$1.00.
One copy, one year, 3.00.
Two copies, one year, 5.00.

No. 137.



Carefully the hand lifted the veil, and the figure gazed upon the handsome face of Pirate Paul.

DEATH-NOTCH, THE DESTROYER: OR, THE SPIRIT LAKE AVENGERS.

BY OLL COOMES.

Author of "Hawkeye Harry," "Boy Spy," "Ironsides, the Scout," etc.

CHAPTER VI. A NEW DANGER.

"Death-Notch is at the door."
The words fell from Omaha's lips like a thunderbolt from a cloudless winter sky. The Young Avengers started to their feet and gazed in speechless surprise at the door, as if expecting to see the young destroyer burst in upon them.
The shock had come unexpected, and although their number assured them of their ability to defy his power, they were thrown into a state of great suspense and anxiety, through their expectancy of standing face

to face with the dreaded young Scalp-Hunter.
But while they thus stood with their eyes fixed upon the door, they were startled by a sound in the adjoining room. It was a dull, sodden sound, like that which would be produced by the fall of a heavy body. They fixed their eyes upon the partition door, then glanced from one to the other interrogatively.
Had Death-Notch entered the door by a secret passage? Who knew but that cabin was his own obscure retreat?
Scarcely had these questions formed in the minds of the Young Avengers when a

figure appeared in the doorway. But it was not Death-Notch. To their surprise, it was the form of a young Indian, whose gaudy head-dress bespoke the insignia of a chief. He was a Sioux, painted and plumed for the war-path. He was a tall, powerful fellow, with a broad, evil face, upon which rested a malicious, sinister smile; and his small black eyes seemed half-closed, as if dazzled by the light of the fire that was roaring on the hearth.

He stood directly in the doorway, with his muscular arms folded over his massive chest, in token of friendship and peace. There was something imposing in his powerful, handsome form, and his fearless, easy attitude, and for a moment our friends regarded him with a look of mingled surprise and admiration.

Then the hand of Omaha was seen to steal slowly toward his girdle, and a cloud of scorn and indignation to settle upon his dusky face. Then his lips were seen to part, and with all the disdain and insult which he could throw into his tone, he asked:

"Ugh! what does young Sleepy-Eyes, the dog of a Sioux, want here?"

"Scalps!" was the prompt and laconic reply of the haughty young chief, as a grim smile swept over his broad, sensual face.

The hands of our young friends quickly flew to their belts; but, despite this hostile manifestation, young Sleepy-Eyes never moved a muscle, but seemed to be totally oblivious to the movement.

Omaha's native vindictiveness was beginning to rise to a point almost beyond restraint.

"Let the friends of Omaha," he said, addressing his friends, "look upon Sleepy-Eyes, the murderer of their friends, and say whether he shall stand there and defiantly tell us he is here for scalps."

Still Sleepy-Eyes never moved a muscle, but retained his silent, disdainful attitude.

To our white friends it now became evident that Omaha was the object of his contempt, and that he was waiting the address of an enemy more worthy of his august recognition. So Fred Travis addressed him in the Sioux dialect, of which he was master:

"What does the young Sioux chief seek here alone?" he asked.

Young Sleepy-Eyes drew himself up to his full height. His breast swelled out, and with a slight toss of the plumed head, which indicated his recognition of young Travis, he replied:

"These woods are the hunting-grounds of the Sioux. He has a right to go where his will dictates. What do the young pale-faces seek here on our hunting-ground?"

"Shelter from the storm was the object that brought us to this cabin," replied Fred, evasively.

"But you carry arms," said the chief, glancing at their rifles leaning against the wall, "and a dog of an Omaha keeps you company."

A fierce, revengeful light shot from the eyes of Omaha. His fingers tightened upon the haft of his tomahawk, and but for the look which Fred gave him, he would have struck the chief down. He had learned forbearance of the white man; and, turning on his heel with a contemptuous smile, walked away. But of all this the young chief seemed totally unconscious, showing with what contempt an Indian regards an enemy of his own race.

"Omaha," said Travis, "is our friend and guide."

"But why do the young white braves wander so far from the lodges of their fathers?"

"Go ask the waters of Okibogi and Spirit lakes. Listen to the winds whispering to the forest-leaves of what they saw when the Sioux and Dakotahs were there. Our fathers are dead, and their wigwams are in ashes."

"Then the children of the white braves have come to avenge their death?" said Sleepy-Eyes.

"We have not harmed the hair of a Sioux's head," replied Travis. "We have come to ascertain whether the Sioux carried any of our friends away into captivity."

"Go then to our village and see," returned Sleepy-Eyes, and there was an undercurrent in his tone and looks which our friends did not fail to understand.

Death-Notch was altogether forgotten by the whites. They supposed at once Omaha had mistaken Sleepy-Eyes—who had entered by some secret passage—for the young Scalp-Hunter. But it seemed a little strange to them that Sleepy-Eyes should appear so overbearing and insolent, unless it was a veil to conceal his savage fears.

The storm without was growing fiercer each moment. Drops of rain, mingled with hail, had begun to fall in a sullen and continuous roar upon the roof.

"Perhaps," said young Travis, determined to show the chief no favors, "you can tell us whether you have any of our friends captives, or not?"

"And if I refuse, what then?" asked the chief.

"We will be compelled to detain you a prisoner until you give us the desired information, or exchange you, should we find any of our friends are captives."

A scornful smile convulsed the bronzed, sensual face of the young chief. He made no reply to Travis' remarks, but stepped to one side from the passage. Then what was our young friends' surprise to see a second Indian appear in the doorway, from the shadows of the adjacent room.

A dark suspicion rushed suddenly across our young friends' minds, and that suspicion was soon verified when they saw this second savage step aside and a third one appear, followed by a fourth, fifth, and so

on, until ten grim and hideous Indian warriors stood before them, tomahawk in hand!

Fred now knew the cause of the chief's insolence, and realized what a terrible blunder they had committed.

Without a doubt the cunning Sioux had ensconced themselves in the dark loft, or adjacent room, before they had entered the cabin, and yet with such cunning and caution that not the least sign of their presence had been discovered by the keen, watchful eyes of Omaha.

An indiscriminate massacre now seemed imminent. The young men had laid aside most of their weapons, and one movement toward their recovery would be the signal for the Indians to strike. In the breast pocket of his hunting-shirt, however, Fred Travis carried a small pistol, and in order to get hold of it without awakening suspicion, he calmly folded his arms across his breast, permitting his hand to slip into his pocket as he did so.

At the same instant the same thought seemed to have inspired his companions, and instead of manifesting a fear corresponding with their danger, they assumed an attitude of ease and indifference.

There were several moments of silence, during which time the two lines of enemies stood eyeing each other, the savages with faces aglow with fiendish triumph, the whites with faces that wore the calmness of brave men when their lives stand in imminent peril.

Sleepy-Eyes was the first to break the silence. He spoke to Fred Travis, who stood directly in front of him.

"Will the young pale-face still say he will keep Sleepy-Eyes a prisoner? Or does his bravery grow weak at sight of my warriors?"

Fred felt as keenly the retort of the chief as he did the peril of his situation; but with creditable promptness he replied: "I care not to idle words with Sleepy-Eyes, but if he has come here to quarrel with us, he will never leave here alive with his warriors."

A low, silent and mocking laugh escaped the savages' lips, and but for this slight confusion they might have heard the click of Fred's pistol-lock in his bosom; but to his threat, the chief retorted:

"Sleepy-Eyes quarrels not with an inferior foe."

"But he will scalp innocent women and children, like a sneaking coward," replied Fred, indignantly. The youth saw what was coming—that a conflict was inevitable—and he resolved to resist in words, at least, the insults of the subtle savage.

"Ugh!" ejaculated the chief. "The pale-face speaks now like a weak squaw—with a crooked tongue."

These were the last words the contemptuous chief ever uttered. There was a flash before his eyes, the crack of a pistol, and he fell dead with a bullet-hole through his forehead.

Then arose a savage yell, mingled with the battle-cry of the Young Avengers, and the next instant the two lines seemed to dissolve into one. Knives and pistols leaped from their concealments, and tomahawks flashed in the light of the fire as they rose and fell through the air; and high above the roar of the storm without, rung the cries of the combatants, the shrieks of the dying, and the clash of steel.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CONFLICT AND ITS RESULT.

It was a fearful moment there, within the deserted hut. Stung to fury by the death of their chief, the savages pressed hard upon the Young Avengers. But the latter were trained, strong and skillful, and while they managed to ward off the blows of the savages, they made every shot and thrust count. Some grappled and fought hand to hand, but with his tomahawk in his hand, Omaha struck right and left with terrible precision. It seemed impossible that men could fight so hard and long, and none of them fell, but for several minutes the conflict seemed about equal. None had fallen, yet several were wounded on both sides, for the door was getting wet and slippery with their blood.

Suddenly, above the din of the conflict and roar of the storm, a wild voice was heard without demanding admittance to the cabin, each shout being accompanied by a heavy blow upon the cabin door. But this lasted for only a moment. The door yielded, and a figure rushed in—the figure of a man. In one hand he held a tomahawk, in the other one of the then most deadly weapons of the day, a Colt's revolver. From the latter weapon report after report rang out, and as an accompaniment, the tomahawk rose and fell with deadly precision upon the heads of the savage foe.

The tide of battle was turned in a moment. "Death-Notch! Death-Notch!" burst in accents of terror from the lips of the savages, and the few that were alive and able, fled from the hut, and sought safety under cover of the night and storm. The conflict was ended. Six of the ten savages lay dead and dying. Three of the Avengers were seriously wounded, and but for the cramped position in which the savages were compelled to fight with their tomahawks, some of the Avengers would have undoubtedly been slain.

In a minute, almost, after the conflict, most of its terrors were forgotten by the Young Avengers, in the startling realization of their being in the presence of the terrible Death-Notch, who had burst in during the conflict and routed the savages.

Not a little surprised were our friends to see that the young Scalp-Hunter was of about medium size, and wore a regular hunter-garb of buck-skin. His head-gear, however, was quite a novelty. It was a steel cap, not altogether unlike the *morion* worn by the warriors of the middle ages. To this cap was attached a beaver which entirely concealed the face. But masses of long, rippling black hair fell down his back, and black, fiery eyes gleamed through the holes of his mask.

Fred Travis' mind at once reverted to the youthful horseman he had seen that day in the forest—the same whom Omaha had said was Death-Notch, and whom he had said was a female. The being before him seemed larger than the horseman; but then he was dressed differently. And there was that same wealth of raven tresses, regal head and swelling chest. But were they one and the same person?

Our young friends seeing that he offered them no violence—in fact, had proven a friend in the most dangerous moment of their lives—supposed at once that he was some eccentric being, more daring than wise.

Fred Travis was the first to speak.

"Your coming was very opportune."

"Glad to hear it," said the stranger, in a tone that was soft and musical as a woman's. "But then you were pressing the red devils closely, my young friends."

"Pardon me, but may I ask who you are?"

The masked avenger made no reply, but raising aloft his tomahawk, he struck the wall twice with its keen edge, and chipped out a small notch thereon.

"Do you understand that?" he asked.

"It is the death-notch of the young Scalp-Hunter."

"As such I am known," replied the avenger, "though I hope I am not as terrible a creature to you as I am reputed to be to the whites. The whites are my own race and friends; but the Sioux—curse them!—I am mad-crazy with hatred and vengeance toward them!"

The young Scalp-Hunter did not remove his mask, but passed his hand over it occasionally, to see that no part of his face was exposed. But, despite this eccentricity, the Young Avengers became decidedly easy over the true character of Death-Notch. That he was young there was not a single doubt. That he was a deadly foe of the savages was no more than they had anticipated, and those fabulous stories of his colossal size were proven to be "moonshine."

A cry of pain from one of the Avengers drew the attention of his companions from Death-Notch, and they at once proceeded to ascertain the extent of each one's injury, and dress the wounds as well as their surgical skill would admit. In this they were assisted by the young Scalp-Hunter, who showed that he had a heart capable of the tenderest of human sympathies.

The wounded being cared for, the band began removing the lifeless savages from the cabin; and while thus engaged, the crack of a rifle was suddenly heard without. A bullet whizzed into the room through the open door, and Death-Notch was heard to utter a low, quick gasp, and was seen to stagger and sink to his knees.

The door was instantly closed and barred by Omaha, while Fred Travis sprang to Death-Notch's assistance, exclaiming:

"My God, young friend, are you shot?"

"Not bad," was the laconic reply of the young Scalp-Hunter, as he arose to his feet. "I did, however, receive quite a blow from a once ball of lead; but this was insufficient powder behind it to do its work. See there?"

As he spoke, he drew from the bosom of his hunting-shirt a battered bullet, and handed it to Fred for inspection. There was no trick about it. It was a genuine leaden ball, still warm with the heat of the powder and the friction of the concussion.

The sight of this bullet filled the young men with no little surprise and wonder. By what power was the Scalp-Hunter enabled to stay the danger of a leaden ball? It looked a little strange.

Death-Notch saw that our friends were puzzled, and at once drew their attention from the incident by an evasive remark.

In a short time the excitement had subsided, and the Lake Avengers found themselves in a general conversation with the masked stranger. They found him to be a person of more than ordinary character. His language was guarded, but showed evidence of some educational refinements and good thoughts. But when asked why he pursued such a course of vengeance, he replied:

"I can not help it. This may seem an absurd assertion to you, but it is true. There are times, however, when my soul shudders with horror at the deeds of my vengeance. Then again my heart becomes fired uncontrollably with that maddening passion. I can not fight it back. It comes upon me like the spasms of one addicted to periodical attacks of insanity. Yet, for all this, I feel that I have a just cause for my deeds of revenge. And I think sometimes, however absurd that thought may be, that Heaven justifies me in my course. And there are other savages yet to feel the weight of my vengeance, as I have felt and suffered the weight of their barbarity. The cries of a tortured mother and angel sister ring in my ears in fancy as they did in reality, for long bitter weeks, while in the hands of these red fiends. And as I was compelled to witness their suffering, agony, and shame, so shall their captors witness my revenge."

A deep silence followed this revelation of sorrow and vengeance. Every heart had been alike touched with pity and revenge. The Avengers felt that their own fates were in a manner connected with that of the young Scalp-Hunter, and at once made known to him the object that had led them into the country.

When he had heard their story of the murder of their friends at the lakes, Death-Notch expressed his heartfelt sympathies for them, and promised to aid them, as far as possible, in their endeavors to rescue their friends. Yet, despite these kind-hearted manifestations, he would not reveal his features.

For over an hour the storm continued to rage in all its fury. Finally it began to break away, and by midnight the heavens were clear and the stars were shining bright and sparkling. The moon came up, and then Death-Notch turned to the Young Avengers, and said:

"Friends, the storm is over. We are only about ten miles from the Indian village, and if we remain here an hour longer, the savage, or whoever it was that attempted my life a while ago, will bring the whole Sioux tribe upon us."

"Then we had better not delay a moment in seeking other quarters," said Fred Travis.

The little band at once proceeded to act upon Fred's suggestion, and procuring their weapons, they left the deserted hut. It was, however, with great difficulty that the three wounded youths journeyed through the forest without assistance.

Death-Notch advised them to proceed at once to Stony Cliff, where the wounded would be safe and receive the proper attention. The village was some fifteen miles away, and acting upon the masked youth's advice, they bent their footsteps in that direction.

The Scalp-Hunter was to accompany them several miles, when his homeward course would lead him in another direction.

As they moved slowly onward, guided by Omaha, Fred and the mysterious Death-Notch followed on a short distance behind, conversing in low tones. They had journeyed in this manner several miles when those in front discovered that Fred and Death-Notch were nowhere in sight or hearing. So they stopped and waited for

them several minutes, but they did not come up.

Meanwhile they were startled by what seemed to be the report of a pistol. The sound was behind, though some distance away.

There was something singular about Fred's absence and about that shot. What did it all mean? Surely they had not got into trouble with a band of skulking Indians, or other sounds would have been heard. Was it possible that Death-Notch had dealt foully with Fred?

The Avengers sent Omaha back to investigate. But he soon returned and Fred was not with him. His face wore a clouded expression that spoke louder than words to his companions:

Fred Travis could not be found!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE HIDDEN RANCHE.

For more than a century past, white renegades, outlaws and prairie pirates have been one of the most active elements of evil of the frontiers, and have been almost as detrimental to the advancement of civilization as the red-man himself.

They are usually composed of a class of men who, having become the dregs of moral society and not being able to live without violating the laws of their country, flee from the vengeance of that law to the frontier, where they can have ample scope for their wicked inclinations. And here, within the dominions of the red-man, they gather into bands, and although there may be a certain code of honor among themselves, that honor does not extend beyond their own dens.

In their piratical raids upon the settlements and emigrant parties, these freebooters are seldom actuated by cupidity, but more to give action to their reckless and destructive spirit. If pressed hard or likely to be caught, they have a welcome resort of safety under the strong arm of the red-skins, whose will they always aim to keep so pliable that it will readily bend to their own purposes.

The country in and about Stony Cliff was infested with a band of these prairie freebooters, led by a notorious scamp called Pirate Paul.

The depredations of this band had been less frequent at Stony Cliff than other settlements along the river below, and for over a year Pirate Paul had roamed over a goodly portion of the western territory, creating as much fear and excitement, almost, among the settlers as Inkpadnah and his host. But, what was most singular about this pirate band, it could never be traced to any den or stronghold, and their ubiquity seemed marvelous. However, it was generally believed that their headquarters were somewhere in the vicinity of Stony Cliff. They had been traced by experienced scouts to the river's bank within a mile of the village. Here they had always taken to the water and further traces of them could not be found. It was very strange, too, where they went. In fact, the whole thing was clothed in a bit of mystery that the shrewdest detective and most skillful scouts could not solve.

In the mean time, Pirate Paul was apprised of every movement they made, and laughed to scorn their every attempt at finding him. By a systematic procedure, and the assistance of a number of able spies, he was always ready to defeat their plans; and upon one occasion he managed to implicate his pursuers as the real robbers, themselves.

On the night following that of the storm, a number of the settlers of Stony Cliff were met in consultation with several settlers of Clontarf's Post—a settlement some fifteen miles down the river.

The settlers of the latter place had, on the night before the storm, sustained a heavy robbery, and on the night of the storm two or three persons had been robbed in Stony Cliff.

The settlers of Clontarf had tracked the robbers within two miles of Stony Cliff, when the storm came on and obliterated every sign of their trail.

The two parties were met in order to take some steps for a more general and thorough search for Pirate Paul's den than had ever been made.

But, at the same time that the settlers were in council, Pirate Paul and his men, numbering in all fifteen, were in council, also. The apartment in which these freebooters sat was a spacious subterranean room, bearing the handiwork of the great Architect of the Hills.

It is the hour of midnight when we would conduct the reader through mazes of tangled forests, and dark, echoless hills chambers into the hidden rancho of Pirate Paul.

Around a rough deal table upon which were cards, dice, bottles and glasses, we see the robbers sitting. Each of them, for some reason or other, has a red head-band around his brow. To this is attached a small, white veil that hangs down over the face, so that we can not see the features. Upon each of these veils we see a red figure, and by these figures the robbers know each other instead of their names. They seem to adhere to method and form—a form as old as that of the senatorial Council of the Roman Inquisition.

Pirate Paul was known as Number One, and the flaming figure upon his veil told which the captain was. They sat around the table in the order of their numbers. One being first; and although there were but fifteen present, the last number was Seventeen. Why was this? Glance around that circle of form and you will see that Seven and Ten are missing.

They are not boisterous in their conversation. They speak in guarded tones, as though afraid of being overheard. Cards and dice seem to occupy the minds of the robbers as we enter; but as the moments wear on, they hear a clear young voice say:

"Number Ten seems to be detained for some reason or other."

"Give him time, Captain Paul," said Number Three. "You know it's a long way to Stony Cliff."

A low, half-suppressed laugh followed this remark.

"Probably the settlers are on the alert, or some one is at the cabin, and can't get away," said Five. "Never fear. The spy will be here at the proper time."

"Yes, if he hasn't turned traitor, like El Pardou," said Six.

"In that case," replied Pirate Paul, "we'll serve him as we did Pardou: take him to the woods and hang him, and put Death-Notch's stamp upon him. But then I think we need have no fear."

"Not a bit of it!" growled Thirteen, "for he's comin' this blessed mornin'."

True enough, footsteps were heard descending a flight of steps, and a moment later the person in question appeared in their midst, with veiled face.

It was the spy, Number Ten.

"Well, you're back at last," said Pirate Paul.

"Back," was the laconic reply of Ten.

"Any news?"

"Lots of it. The settlers have been in deliberation as to Pirate Paul and Co. The Clontarfers are terrible wrothly over that little affair."

"Ah! what else?"

"Say that Scott Shirely, the Hudson Bay Agent, has discovered and revealed to Sylvester Gray the fact that her lover, Ralph St. Leger, is Pirate Paul."

Again the robbers laughed.

"Go on, Ten; what else?" asked the impatient chief.

"They blame Death-Notch of El Pardou's death. They say the Gregory family have some little cash and valuables. The search for our rancho will begin just as soon as Scott Shirely and a party of his traders and trappers return from the Omaha country, where they're gone for peltries. The seven Young Avengers, under the Friendly, Omaha, are still at the Cliff, though they are yet in a terrible stew about their captain, Fred Travis. I think they call him. They've been searching all day for him; they think he has fallen a victim to Death-Notch."

"Well," said Pirate Paul, "we'll have to lay quiet for awhile. At least, until that general search for our rancho is over with; and we had better arrange it so as to take a part in the search. But while those Avengers are about, we'll have to be careful. That Omaha is a cunning chap, with an eye like a cat and a nose like a hound. After all is quiet, we'll wait on the Gregory family, and see about their cash and valuables."

After some further remarks the council of robbers broke up. The veiled men arose from their seats, and sought their couches in various parts of the cavern. Pirate Paul and Number Ten, however, still remained in a private consultation.

"Now, Finchley," said the robber chief, when they were alone, "tell me what you learned of Sylvester Gray—whether Scott Shirely is likely to win her from her robber-lover, Ralph St. Leger."

"It's hard tellin', cap'n. Miss Gray is no fool. True, Shirely told her that you, cap'n, war Pirate Paul—that is, Ralph St. Leger; but she don't seem to believe it. She and Miss Martha Gregory are thick as a swarm of bees, and I heard Martha tell her that she did not like the looks of Scott Shirely."

"What kind of a looking girl is that Gregory?"

"Young—about twenty. She's handsome, and got sweet blue eyes, pretty ripe lips, and a heavenly form."

"Quite a vivid description," laughed Pirate Paul; "but what seems to be her objection to Shirely?"

"Don't know. Acts as though she's known him before."

Pirate Paul started, and Finchley noticed that he became uneasy.

"Finchley," he at length said, "I want you to keep a close watch upon the movements of that girl. She may be an enemy of mine, and attempt to defeat my meetings with Sylvester Gray. If I find that such is the case, then will I do what I have long contemplated: carry Sylvester away by force, and compel her to wed me."

"I'll keep a watch out, Cap'n Ralph," returned the robber-spy.

"Then hasten back to the Cliff, and apprise me from time to time of the movements of the settlers."

All square, Cap. "Good-night," replied the spy; and rising from his seat, he glided away through the cavern like an eel.

Pirate Paul, the young robber chief, now sat alone, and he at once became deeply absorbed in thought. As the moments wore on, he rested his elbow on the table and his head on his palm. In this position he fell asleep.

Something like half an hour had passed, when a figure wrapped in a blanket, with a white veil over the face, stole on tip-toe from the shadows of the cavern toward the sleeping robber. When within reach of him it stopped, and from the folds of the blanket put out a small, white hand.

It was a woman's hand, without a doubt. Carefully it lifted the veil that covered the face of Pirate Paul, and the figure gazed upon the handsome features of the robber, expressionless in slumber.

For a moment the figure remained thus, apparently transfixed by the face of the young pirate-chief; then it turned, and glided away in the direction it had come. And Pirate Paul slept on.

CHAPTER IX.

A BLOW IN THE DARK.

LET us now return and look after Fred Travis, whom we left with Death-Notch, in a preceding chapter.

The young captain and the mysterious Scalp-Hunter followed on within hearing of Omaha and the Avengers, conversing without restraint upon the dangers that surrounded them.

"Then, can you not go to Stony Cliff with us?" Fred asked.

"No, Travis," he replied, with that usual familiarity of the backwoodsman. "I have taken upon myself an oath never to enter a white settlement until I have unbudged my heart of its load of vengeance. Besides, there is another person in this world claiming my presence and protection."

"Ah! a wife, or sister, perhaps?" thought Fred, but he did not give expression to his thoughts. He did not wish to appear inquisitive, so evaded the subject by at once introducing another.

They moved on, conversing in low tones; but Fred noticed, finally, that Death-Notch's voice was changing—that he spoke in a quick, excited tone. At length he came to a sudden halt, and said:

"My God, Travis! It is coming on me again! Go on and leave me. I might—"

"What is the matter, Death-Notch?" asked Fred, startled by the unearthly expression of his voice, and the dull scintillation of his eyes through the holes of his mask.

"I am going mad, Travis, mad!" replied Death-Notch, grasping a limb, as if for support. "Oh God! such a passion is awful. It is not one of physical or mental debility, but a fit—a fit of revenge. I can not keep it back. Go, leave me, quick—quick, Travis!"

"But, Death-Notch, let me stay and take care of you."

"Ho! ho! a legion of demons couldn't hold me. You have been with me already too long. When I am away from all white faces, save hers, then I am human, unless a savage is about. But faces that are white and voices like my own recall days that are gone—they excite me—put that awful devil in my heart! Go, Travis, go, go, go!"

Filled with that species of terror which one experiences when in the presence of a madman, Fred, in obedience to the strange youth's request, turned and pushed rapidly on in pursuit of his friends; though he was loth to leave the mysterious Death-Notch alone, for fear harm would befall him, while laboring under his violent attack of madness.

During his halt with the youth, Fred had permitted quite a distance to grow between him and his friends; and now, as he fled suddenly from the mad Death-Notch, he was off their trail. Still he pressed on, in hopes of coming up with them soon; but in this he was disappointed. He stopped and listened for them, but he could hear nothing. He was in the act of calling to them, when the quick, heavy tread of moccasined feet broke upon his ears. He supposed at once it must be Death-Notch following him, and as he did not wish to encounter the mad youth, nor use severe means of protection against him, he sped on toward Stony Cliff. Still, that ominous footstep sounded behind him, and he renewed his exertions; yet, despite his efforts, his pursuer gained upon him each moment.

At length he felt his strength beginning to fail, and that swift pater, pater of feet filled him with terror. It was a precarious situation to be thus pursued by a friend—a mad, crazy friend—who was seeking his life—the life he had been instrumental in saving at the deserted hut. Travis pressed every nerve into the effort, and exerted himself to the utmost. But, steadily, those pursuing feet came nearer and nearer.

Fred turned at last, and drew his pistol. "Back! back!" he shouted; "is it you, Death-Notch?"

"Yes! yes!" echoed an unearthly voice.

Fred raised his pistol on the shadowy form he saw approaching through the undergrowth.

He pressed the trigger as it came nearer. There was a flash and a sharp report.

Still the figure came on. The bullet had missed its mark.

Fred grappled with the form. A sharp struggle ensued, but it lasted only for a moment.

Then young Travis sunk unconscious under a crushing blow upon the head. Had Death-Notch dealt that blow?

CHAPTER X.

A MIDNIGHT DRAMA.

THE hour was midnight. The Little Sioux river, swollen by the recent rain, was plunging madly on, bearing upon its turbulent, throbbing bosom immense bodies of driftwood and debris.

There was a sullen roar of the waves as they beat and churned themselves to a foam, in their mad endeavors to break beyond the confines of their channel. This, however, they will soon do—in less than an hour—when the little, overgrown streams have poured their united mites into the roaring river.

Forth from the deep shadows of the woods bordering the stream, there suddenly emerged a human form, bearing in its arms a heavy, lifeless object. Upon the bank of the angry river the figure stopped, and gazed up and down for several moments.

Hard by lay a large log upon which the figure finally deposited its burden. Then it busied itself for some time around the log, apparently engaged in lashing the object to it.

Ten minutes later, no sign of life was there. The mysterious figure had vanished into the gloomy shadows of the woods.

Then followed an ominous silence that was broken only by the rush and roar of the river. But, as the minutes wore on, a sharp bark suddenly issued from the solitude of the woods. Then, forth from the dark, deep shadows of the tangled forest came a grim, giant wolf.

The growling brute stole near the log upon which the figure had deposited its burden, and sniffed and snarled around it, then, as with affright, it scampered away into the shadows of the wood again.

But it soon returned; nor was it alone. A dozen of its grim, gray associates came along.

Around the log the wolfish pack began to gather, as if preparing for a banquet. Their sharp barks and long howls evoked the silent echoes for miles, and called other friends trooping to the spot.

Soon a score of dark, shaggy forms were seening and plunging like a vortex about the log.

Why were they there? What quarry were they about to attack?

Still they continue to close around the log, nearer and nearer, their glowing eyes scintillating like beads of fire floating athwart the darkness. In the one of the brutes ventures to sluit his glittering teeth upon the object upon the log, but at the same instant they all recoil like a receding wave, and a groan—a human groan issues from the center of that circle of ravenous beasts.

A human being is lashed upon that log! Who was it? And who with the heart of a demon had been so cruel as to put a fellow-being in such an awful position?

The wolves soon recover from their affright. They rally, and again begin circling around the log, gradually closing in toward it. They are cunning, and feel their way with caution.

Another groan bursts from the lips of the unfortunate being. Again, the wolves recoil, but they soon close in again. They are growing bolder. They are closing for the attack.

The doomed man—for man it is—seems to understand his danger. He struggles to free himself; he tries to break the things that hold him down; he hears the roar of the river hard by; he hears the snarling beasts around him; and now he feels their hot breath upon his cheek; he can not defend himself—he can only cry to Heaven for help. But he seems deserted by all—even Heaven. For now a huge beast fastens its fangs upon his arm, and tears at the tender, quivering flesh.

Oh, what a piteous cry bursts forth upon the air! But, there is no pitying ear to hear it. The wolves have nothing to fear. They seem to know it, and close in for their feast.

But hark! what thunderous noise? It comes like the booming roar of breakers dashing over a stony reef. It is water! The swollen waves of the river have broken from its banks, and are sweeping madly along the shore in one mighty, resistless flood, bearing every thing along before it.

The wolves utter a cry of affright. They turn from the object of their banquet to flee. But they are too late. The flood grasps them up in its strong embrace, and they are carried away on its foaming bosom. But they are not alone. In their midst, tossing and rolling upon the torrent, is that human form still lashed to the log.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 136.)

The Red Scorpion: OR, THE BEAUTIFUL PHANTOM.

BY A. R. MORRIS, JR.,
AUTHOR OF "FLAMING TALISMAN," "BLACK CRESS-
CENT," "WOODWIND," "HERCULES, THE
HUNCHBACK," "TRAIL OF MARLA,"
ETC., ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

KARL KURTZ had gone to the city of L., and Carew believed that the object of his visit was to arrange for the transfer of the property.

As an act of policy, he had not insisted on his first demand, which was to have Kurtz attend to this matter on the day following his arrival at Birdwood—Eddy's death had made the agonized father plead for time to recover from the shock of so terrible a loss, which was granted.

Now, however, the delicate villain was pricked by the uncertainty of delay, and, therefore, determined that nothing further should interfere with his plans.

But Vincent Carew was dealing with a man who, naturally shrewd, was now twice cunning in his desperate brain-taxing for means to defeat the projects of his enemy.

While he was not less humble, cringing, submissive before the one who crushed him under the iron heel of mastery, he had resolved upon a course by which to sweep this dreaded being from his path.

Obviously, his visit to the city was to do as he had been ordered. When he returned to Birdwood, he found Vincent Carew seated on one of the iron settees upon the lawn, gazing over the columns of a newspaper.

"Ho, there! Say, Vincent Carew!" he called from the piazza, and his voice savored much of his old bluntness of humor.

Carew approached.

"Well, sir, what about the deeds?" was his immediate question.

"Do you want everybody in the house to know our business, ha?" he continued; "Come inside, sir—up-stairs to my library, and we'll talk this over," saying which, he started to ascend the staircase.

Carew followed.

"Now then," said Kurtz, by way of opening, when they were alone.

"You have fixed it all up?"

"No, I haven't fixed it all up."

"How?" frowning. "What do you mean?"

"Mean what I say, sir. How am I going to fix things when they can't be fixed, ha?"

"No trifling with me, Mark Drael," Carew said, sternly. "Why have you failed to do as I ordered?"

"Because I could not help it."

"Explain, then."

"My lawyer says it can't be done on such short notice."

"Ridiculous! Get another lawyer. This must be adjusted at once."

"I have told him exactly what to do, and he now has it in hand."

"How long does he want?"

"Four days."

"I shall not wait four days," Vincent Carew spoke decisively.

"He is at work now; and you wouldn't have me take it away from him?"

Carew thought a moment; then he said:

"If I thought you were trifling—"

"I am not trifling. Every thing is being attended to as you wish. You'll find me in earnest," and he added, mentally: "Yes, more in earnest than you dream of. You'll be out of my way before the deeds are complete, unless Satan aids you in escaping me."

"So be it. I suppose I must wait. A day or two will make but little difference. Now—the money." His face was gloomy as a rain-cloud at midday.

"That is all right. Here is a check on my bank for the amount you named. You can draw and deposit it yourself."

Kurtz handed him a check for fifty thousand dollars. He certainly met that demand promptly.

"As this is all for the present, I'll leave you."

Carew would have gone out, but Kurtz detained him.

"Stop. I had forgotten one thing, Vincent Carew. About Lorilyn."

"Well, what of her?"

"She does not like you."

"I know that, and care not. She shall be my wife. I have spoken to her of my intentions, and been repulsed. See to it."

"I can not do it, sir."

"What!" the exclamation was sharp and grating.

"I say I can not do it. Lorilyn does not like you, and I am not going to force her into such a distasteful union."

There was that in this speech which, for a moment, astounded Vincent Carew. He seemed unable to comprehend. Then he caught in the words a latent defiance, a spirit that meant to combat his schemes, a refusal to act.

"Beware, Mark Drael!" he hissed.

"Now, let me reason," returned Karl Kurtz. "I think too much of Lorilyn to sacrifice her in this way."

"Beware!" came like the warning of a rattlesnake from Carew's lips.

Kurtz was, indeed, braving a deadly serpent.

"If you can persuade her to marry you, well and good; only, I will be greatly surprised if you meet with that success."

"Mark Drael, have you cast aside your senses? Do not tempt me too far, or, by the Eternal I will bring down destruction on your head. You will do as I—"

"No, I shall not."

How this man, whom he so completely held in his power, dared to refuse obedience, baffled his penetrating abilities. As he began to understand that Kurtz was serious, the anger of a demon rose within his heart, and he cried:

"Mark Drael, is this a defiance?"

"No, not a defiance; but I mean to save Lorilyn. You may take my money, my estate, Vincent Carew, and, old as I am, I will go out into the world and begin again the battle of—"

"I could take all you have, anyhow! I will not suffice. I must have her!"

"I deeply wronged her mother, Vincent Carew, and, to atone, I have learned myself to love Lorilyn St. Clair as if she was my own child. She shall not be forced to do anything, even to save me. You may do your worst—I have made up my mind to save her."

"Enough. Hear, now: the law shall be put upon your track! Detectives are yet on the alert to catch the murderer of Herod Do Wynn. They will welcome any assistance. I have the dying confession of Antoine Martinet, which shall convict you. You shall go to prison! Next comes the trial! After that—for you will be proven guilty as the instigator—perhaps, will be the gallows; or, say imprisonment till those limbs are bent and cramped and aching! And while you are thus suffering, you may think of Lorilyn—think of her as a prisoner in this house, where I will be; and if she is not my wife, she will be as a mercy to become such! Ha! ha! Tremble, Mark Drael! Tremble! This is a life duel, with keener weapons than those of lead and steel!" and Carew, having delivered these wrathful threats, strode from the room, muttering to himself as he went:

"Yes, and I'll do more! I said the end of shade was not yet at Birdwood, if you tempted me! I'll keep my word! Another twenty-four hours will cast a second death-pall over this house! Ha! ha! ha!"

Like the chuckle of a fiend came the low laugh, like the orb of a basilisk shone the gray eyes as he hurried away.

In the hall below he met Dyke Rouel.

"Have you fed it to-day?" he asked, mysteriously.

"Yes, master."

"Good. And you put on the usual quantity of drops?"

"Yes, master."

"Guard it well, Dyke—guard it well."

"I say, master—Dyke detained him as he was moving past.

"It's all fixed."

"Ah!—the duel?"

"Yes."

"When?"

"To-night at twelve, master."

"Where? The weapons?"

"Over there in that grove"—Dyke pointed through the side-door; "and it's to be with pistols. Say, master, I wouldn't fight him, if I was you; indeed I wouldn't. Just think—why, you might get shot!"

"Bah!" Carew turned away from him.

Considering how great was the hold of Vincent Carew on Karl Kurtz, it may appear singular that the latter should be so indifferent to the threats of the former.

But Kurtz had very plausible reasons for his behavior. First, he loved Lorilyn, and was endeavoring, in that love, to atone for some deep wrong he had done her mother in years gone by. He would not sacrifice her to a man of Carew's nature, be the consequences what they might. Second—and the security he felt in refusing to assist Carew in his suit—he possessed the drug purchased of Cale Fez, and had decided to begin administering it at once. Three days would do the deed that was to free him of a curseful presence; and in three days he argued that Carew could scarce accomplish much against him.

He little imagined, however, the blow about to be aimed at him; he did not think to what act Carew's anger would tend, or he might have trod his ground with greater caution, might have pursued a different course, in order not to arouse the devilish vengeance that lurked, like a magazine of bitter spleen, in the dark soul of the man he braved.

As Dyke stood in the entry, lawyer Gimp came out of the parlor and addressed him with:

"See here, my fellow; didn't Mr. Kurtz come in just now?"

"My name's Dyke Rouel, sir," whined Rouel, as he twisted his eyebrows in a comical manner.

"Oh, 'is, ch? Now, I didn't ask you what your name was. I want to know if you saw Mr. Kurtz come in?"

"I—I think I did, sir."

"You think you did?"

"Yes, sir."

"Huuh!" and with this rather undecipherable grunt, Thaddeus Gimp ascended the staircase. He desired to see Kurtz about that little installment business, and had an idea he would find him in the library.

Oscar Storms, after dinner, had retired to a room up-stairs, where he was striving to allay his impatience, by wondering and conjecturing as to what could be the object of the interview Lorilyn had appointed for that night at eleven o'clock—and which he was eager enough to grant.

By virtue of the authority his master had assumed at Birdwood, Dyke Rouel was not treated as a servant, but went wherever he chose, did as he pleased, in fine, made himself perfectly at home.

Now, when alone, he entered the parlor with no object, and as he did so, he caught sight of a piece of paper lying upon the carpet. Picking it up, he saw, that something was written on it. Naturally, he read the brief paragraph it contained. Instantly the sallow countenance lighted up; he crunched the slip in his hand.

"Good!—Good!—Good!" he repeated, several times. "I can prevent the duel. I'll watch for her to-night, and, as she goes out, tell her. She'll stop it. She won't have any goings-on like that here. How very, very good she is! For Vincent Carew must not die till I've had my revenge! Yes, my revenge!"—his voice falling to a low, thoughtful tone. "Chance after chance I've had to take his life, and thus avenge poor Jessie; and my courage all ways failed. But it must be—it must be; I can never punish him in any other way. He must fall by my hand!"

He had found the note from Lorilyn to Oscar Storms.

CHAPTER XV.

SINCE the death of Eddy Kurtz, Mrs. Kurtz had passed through the dangers of a severe illness, a nervous prostration, wrought by grief on a system too weak to cope with the stern shocks of life.

She was but convalescing; in fact, had scarce yet left her room. And on this night—the night appointed for the duel in the grove—she retired about ten o'clock.

As slumber slowly drew her eyelids shut, so, slowly, was a dark fate weaving hellish meshes in that household; and a fiend, with the face and form of a human, was counting the minutes as they passed, ere perpetrating that which would curdle the blood of upright men.

Alone in his room, where the lamp jet glimmered low and unsteadily, and airs in opposite to the tumult of his passions made the hour's solitude foreboding, sat Vincent Carew, the evil presence of Birdwood.

Before him, on the table, was the metal box; on this his eyes were fastened with a fierce, unearthy gaze; and it would seem that some horrible music kept him chained, silent, while a red fluid covered such portions of his foul-out visage as was not hidden beneath the massy beard.

This position he had occupied since eight o'clock, listening as the hour strokes rung out in the hall below—counting nine, then ten; now all was still.

Gradually his eyes wandered from the box, around the room. He had aroused; the time for action had come.

In his stocking-feet he went to the door, and looked out. Returning for the box, he then passed into the deserted entry, thence proceeding toward a room in one of the wings.

Like a huge death-watch, panting, and ticking slowly with its size, the pendulum of the clock alone broke the ominous stillness which surrounded this dark, mysterious man.

"Thuk! thuk! thuk! thuk!" it went, sounding with a hollow echo through the house.

Carew paused before a door, and placed his ear to the keyhole.

"She sleeps," he muttered, presently. "She is alone—and now, Mark Drael, you shall learn what it is to defy me!"

The door yielded to his touch. In a few seconds there was a shadowy form bending over the bed whereon the wife of Karl Kurtz reposed, unconscious of the deadly peril hovering high.

The dimly-burning light shed a ghastly halo round the room.

He opened the tiny slide in the box, as we have seen him do before. As in the instance of Eddy, he drew a single drop of blood from his finger tip, and placed the red stain upon the snow-white arm of the slumberer.

Then the box was placed over the blood drop, and he waited.

Faintly came the noise like rustling silk, followed by a whispering quietness. Then the quick, angry rebound of the thing within the box, and—with a loud shriek Mrs. Kurtz started from her sleep.

But, ere her eyes could discover objects plainly, Carew, as sudden as thought, blew out the light.

In the darkness he glided away; and none too soon, for there came another scream from the lips of the affrighted woman, who had awakened under a combined sense of fear and pain.

Doors banged, voices exclaimed, servants ran hither and thither, terrified by that piercing cry; warm confusion prevailed.

Karl Kurtz was first at the bedside of his wife. When the lamp was relighted, he found her quivering with fear, pale in features as a corpse.

"What is it, wife—Arline?"

His question was anxious, and he strove to calm the excitement which rendered her well-nigh speechless.

"Oh! I hardly know! I hardly know!" she cried.

Several of the housemaids came upon the scene, gazing, wondering, frightened.

"Why did you cry out? Was it some cruel dream?"

"Dream?" She repeated the word questioningly, and glanced uneasily about the room.

"Oh, husband! I—I know not what it means! If a dream, it was terribly real. See!—my arm; something stung me."

He looked closely at the arm she held out to him; but there was no mark upon the skin.

"You must be mistaken. It was a dream."

"And I am sure I saw a man standing there!" pointing toward the table.

Retired, the lamp was burning; as I awoke, it was extinguished by some one! Karl Kurtz! Oh! don't leave me alone again to-night!"

The terror had fastened upon her; she could not shake it off.

"I will not, Arline, wife; I shall remain here. But, calm yourself. It was only a nightmare."

"No—no," she said, pressing a hand to her eyes. "It could not have been that; it was too real!"

"Come—begone!"

Karl addressed the servants, who, governed by curiosity, were crowding close around him.

They departed; husband and wife were alone.

Calmed by his gentle reasonings and soothing words, she soon again fell asleep, and he sat watching by her side.

While sitting motionless there, he could not shut out the thoughts which rushed upon him—visions of the years that had passed since she gave her hand in his at the altar, and the unvarying faithfulness with which she had made good her marriage vows.

"If she knew," he muttered, at length, smoothing back the hair from her pallid brow, "would she turn away from and despise the one who has sought to make her life happy? If the worst comes, will this tried partner stand where she has stood so long and lovingly? Ah! sleep on, wife, Arline; you do not know the peril of the hour—you do not know your husband's struggle, his wickedness in the past, his deep repentance now, and—"

He paused; he dared not speak or think of the future, its clouds, its uncertainties—its threat-shaded horizon was unreadable and feared.

But, the deed of the night was done! Once more in his room, Vincent Carew placed the box beneath Dyke's bed. Donning hat and cloak, he descended the stairs.

In the vine-shadows of the piazza, Dyke Rouel, in obedience to orders, awaited him.

"Have you got the case, Dyke?"

"Yes, master, I've got it. And are you really going to fight him? I wouldn't."

"Come, come," moving away along one of the paths.

The clock was just striking eleven.

"Ugh! it's chilly. I feel awful chilly, master," said Dyke, shivering, as he followed in the rear.

"Come, come," urged Carew, in a low, unnatural voice.

"Yes, master, I'm a-coming. But don't you know we're too soon? Why, it was to

be at midnight, and here it's only eleven."

"No matter. Come. I want to be alone; among the trees, where it is quiet."

"And I'm awfully scared, master; indeed I am."

"Bah! Come, come."

A solitary figure paced the sward beneath the trees, near the house.

It was Oscar Storms. Obeying the note he had received, he repaired to the appointed place, but he was there long before the hour fixed; and, with mind wrapt in perplexing surmise, he walked to and fro, glancing occasionally toward the house.

Soon he saw two figures coming along the path. They were Vincent Carew and Dyke Rouel. They passed him, continuing on to a far side of the grove; and, as he watched them, his fist doubled.

"Ay, he shall have 'satisfaction'—the miserable dog. Few men level a pistol with an aim like mine. He shall bite the grass in his death-agonies within the hour!"

He saw another figure approaching. There was no mistaking that form, with its queenly grace, as it glided in the moonlight. It was Lorilyn; and, as she drew near, again the question, which he had asked himself a hundred times since morning, arose:

"What can be the object of this interview?"

"Mr. Storms?" She was by his side.

"Lorilyn."

"I am glad you have granted me this."

"Did you think I would refuse? Love would lead me anywhere at your command."

"Of course, you think this very strange," hesitatingly, as if loth to speak of what she would.

"If I do, I will forget it. I know you have something to say."

"Yes—I—"

"Speak, Lorilyn."

"Oscar, what I am about to do, delicacy condemns. Wait. . . . Twice you have asked me to become your wife."

"Yes, Lorilyn, yes!" His tone was eager, and a sudden hope arose within him.

"And twice I have refused to listen to you," she continued. "But, Oscar, it was not that another claimed my affection; nor was it that I disliked you. We have known each other long, and to me you were ever dear, as a friend. I will not tell you the cause of my action toward you; but let me ask: Do you love me still?" this last with a difficulty that told the effort it required to speak at such variance with her nature.

Oscar caught his breath.

"Love you, Lorilyn?" he exclaimed.

"How can you ask me that? I would give up the world, wealth—yes, I would yield my life, if I thought that, when we met in the great unexplored, you would smile upon me! You never can know the depth of my love, unless my actions are more speaking than words. But, you have spurned me—"

"Stay, Oscar; that is past."

"And now?"

"If you love me still—I do!" he interrupted, fervently.

"Take then, my hand."

"Lorilyn! Lorilyn! do I hear aright?" clasping the hand she extended to him.

He drew her to his breast. She did not resist, but a slight shudder passed over her, and she was silent.

"You tremble, darling."

"The night air is chilly."

It was not the night air which iced her frame; it was that, in permitting his embraces, in pledging him her hand, in molding those words which so thrilled him with an ecstatic joy, she was not prompted by a heart feeling—

"Lorilyn, I am the happiest of men!"

"Our wedding, Oscar, must be to-morrow."

"To-morrow." He looked at her in astonishment.

Though he would have pleaded for an early day, this unexpected haste seemed strange.

"Do you object?"

"No, no; not I. To-night, if you wish it."

"It must be, Oscar. If not to-morrow, I am lost to you forever."

Mere astonishment could not now express his condition of mind.

"It shall be as you say, Lorilyn; and I am all the greater rejoiced to know that I shall possess you so soon. But, explain."

"No, I can not. Ask me no questions until we are husband and wife."

"You will tell me, after that?"

"All." And she added, "To-morrow afternoon, at two precisely, the carriage shall be ready. We will drive to the tavern of the Red Ox, secure a room, and send to L—for a clergyman—"

"Lorilyn, darling, what mystery is this?"

"It must be done in this way, Oscar," she said, with strange emphasis.

"Your word is law."

"The clergyman can marry us there, in secret, when we can return to Birdwood. Now, detain me, no longer, Oscar—I am yours. Remember what I have said; and above all, let no one know of our plans."

"Trust me, Lorilyn."

He kissed the lips of the peerless girl—they were cold, cold as ice; yet, there was a wild joy to him in that embrace, and reluctantly he let her go.

Without a word, she hurried away; and he

Saturday Journal
Published every Monday morning at nine o'clock.
NEW YORK, OCTOBER 26, 1872.

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The following will soon appear in the columns of the SATURDAY JOURNAL:

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Our Arm-Chair.

Chat.—The following illustrates a point which half the authors who write don't seem to apprehend.—A witness describing certain events said: "The person I saw at the head of the stairs was a man with one eye named Jacob Williams." "What was the name of the other eye?" spitefully asked the opposing counsel.—This want of precision of expression is exceedingly prevalent, even among editors who are regarded as literary oracles. We remember a series of articles, in a popular magazine, upon Words and their Uses, in which the author's want of precision and clearness were more apparent than his scholarship; scarcely a paragraph which did not require revision. Of course when "our masters" make such work with syntax, mere pen amateurs ought not to be "blown up" for similar shortcomings. And yet, we wish writers would learn how to express themselves correctly and with precision before essaying the career of authorship.

A correspondent, writing from Philadelphia, says: "In your issue of the 21st I noticed a remedy for the bad habit of tobacco-chewing. I bought ten cents' worth of gentian root, and am happy to say that it has saved me quite an expenditure of money; for I bought fifteen or twenty cents' worth of 'fine cut' daily." The habit referred to is confessedly a vile one, having no good results but many bad effects. How any gentleman can soil his mouth, breath and person—the floor and the pavement where he walks or stands—with the disgusting weed, is past our comprehension. A boy who tries to learn "how to chew" is doing a sad piece of business for himself. We wish, if gentian root is a remedy, that every tobacco-chewer in the land would be induced to invest in the root.

As stated elsewhere, we do not care to receive contributions in which we are requested "not to make changes." If we published a paper for an author's benefit, it might possibly do to give the matter *literatim*; but, as we are not benefactors to the extent of letting every egotist and sickly sentimentalist have their say, we must request those who know better what we want than we ourselves to keep their offerings, or to use them elsewhere. We are ever happy to receive what is good, and take pleasure in printing it; but we reserve to ourselves the right to amend, alter or excise as our judgment dictates.

INFLUENCE OF "ROMANTIC" LITERATURE.

Under the caption of "Runaway Boys," the New York Observer writes as follows: Not long ago three boys, aged from eleven to fourteen, had gotten their heads filled with romantic notions of starting out into the world to seek some bold adventure on the Plains. Having perused some of the "Dime Novels" which are filled with sensational stories, they imagined that each one was to succeed Robinson Crusoe, and become heroes in the eyes of their associates, as they returned again to recount their wonderful hairbreadth escapes among wild Indians, and the bears and wolves of the Rocky Mountains. Having provided themselves with a fowling-piece, ammunition and a knapsack each, and a small sum of money, they stealthily left their homes for the prairies of Illinois. They were not to accept

of any hospitable entertainment, even to a lodging in doors, in order to insure themselves to hardship and fatigue.

Three or four days, during which their anxious parents were scouring the country in search of the runaways, sufficed to cool their ardor, and one night in the woods came near frightening them to death, as the screech-owl started them with its unearthly cry. Then arose the sudden recollection of mother's cupboard, while their sandwiches had become stale, and no tea or coffee or warm milk was at hand to wash them down. It is needless to add that a council of war was held, and a retreat was ordered, which brought them home in short order by the nearest train of cars, much to the mortification of the romantic youths, whose scoldings from anxious fathers and mothers were soon forgotten in the embraces of sisters and brothers, who gathered round the adventurers to see if their hair had not been lifted by the savages, or their bodies torn by wild beasts during their very long absence from home and neglect of lessons at school.

A similar case occurred at Philadelphia not long since; and now the papers are printing a card calling for information in regard to a boy who left his father's house in Brooklyn in the same manner, induced by the reading of sensational stories to start out for himself and try a life of adventure on his own hook.

Is there no remedy for these things? Not always. The story of Robinson Crusoe has stimulated the love of adventure in many a boy's mind; but there is nothing at all of an unhealthy nature in this, the greatest known of any similar work for youth the world has ever seen. But De Foe has been out-heroded by a multitude of scribblers, who write fabulous accounts of such men as "Buffalo Bill," "Belton, the White Chief," etc.; when, if the truth was printed of some of these heroes (?) an American youth would blush for shame at the miserable, low life they have led, to the mortification and disgrace of parents and relatives.

Parents too often give little or no oversight to what their boys read. Naturally, they are glad to know that their sons have a taste for reading, and encourage this desire, as it is laudable, and far better than seeking excitement in the streets and doubtful places of amusement. But nothing can excuse the frequent lack of free intercourse between father and son, beyond that of mere table-talk, often had in the hurry of busy engagements. Get the confidence of your boys, for if you do not, they will make confidants of others, and then the most unhealthy advice from persons whose business is to lead them astray. A boy's nature is generally confiding, but some parents are afraid their dignity will be compromised by too familiar intercourse, and they trust that their boys will find out many things, just as they did when children. And yet how often has the writer looked back with saddened heart to the period of his childhood, when he feared his father almost too much to love him.

The romantic literature of a language is always its most popular reading. Who can tell how many millions of people have read Robinson Crusoe, Swiss Family Robinson, Sanford and Merton, Scottish Chiefs, Arabian Nights, Don Quixote, etc.? Their very currency attests the abiding interest to the human mind there is in these fictitious narratives of adventure, experience, and personal characteristics. And Wonderland is just as enticing now as it ever was. Boys and men alike are as charmed over Mayne Reid as were their fathers over Cooper, or their grandfathers over Walter Scott, and the boys to come after us will be fascinated over the mythic age.

To say that it is wrong to read this class of books, is to condemn much of the most charming writing in the world; and to assume that its effect is deleterious, is to arraign all who have gone before us as weak and wicked; either of which is simply absurd. The books are neither hurtful nor worthless. On the contrary, they are delightful, leading the young mind into pleasant paths, and stimulating it to new fields of thought, feeling and inquiry. Boys always read such romances and always will; so that the truly wise man will not deny them the delights of such reading, but seek simply to place in their hands that which is unexceptionably pure in tone and healthful in its suggestiveness.

The whole end and aim of the publishers of BEADLE'S DIME NOVELS has been to give to the Young People of America such a literature. Covering the field of the Early History and the Settlement of the Old Indian Wars and the Revolution—the life of the modern Border and Wilderness—these books are unquestionably the best examples of American Romance and Historic Literature that have yet been placed within the easy reach of all classes of people. Pure in word and tone; vigorous and original in spirit and story; vivid with personal and local portraiture, it is not too much to say that their influence has been to lead the popular mind into right directions, and to implant not only a taste for good reading and study, but to develop a decided love of our country and its great institutions.

For the mischief that may have been, or yet may be, wrought by certain other "ten-cent" publications, of course the Dime Series (BEADLE'S DIME NOVELS) is no more responsible than the Pilgrim's Progress is responsible for Gulliver's Travels. All good things are perverted; and it is not strange, considering the vast popularity of these works, that the Dime Publishing House of Beadle & Adams, that imitations, good, bad and indifferent, should have found their way to the trade. What readers and the directors of public taste want, is to discriminate carefully in the choice of the books which become current, and to avoid the all too common mistake of associating these worthless or worse "ten-cent" books with the DIME NOVELS, which they no more approach in literary and moral excellence than a vagabond approaches a gentleman.

THE PEACE OF POVERTY

POOR people never live in brown-stone fronts or elegant villa residences, with all the modern improvements. Consequently, in the dead of winter, their furnace-grates never break down, their flat roofs never leak, their water-pipes never burst. Their plate-glass windows are never broken, their dumb-waiters never give out, their patent burglar-alarms never go off at their wrong time. Their coachmen never get drunk, nor careless servants break their Sèvres china.

In fact, one of the chief pleasures of poverty is exemption from the affliction of servitude. No domestics rage around the humble dwellings of the poor. When the daughters of poverty exchange calls, their conversation may dwell on pleasant themes than the trials they have undergone with the cook, the minutiae of the chambermaid's slovenliness, the fact that the second girl is more than mistrusted of "taking things," it not being fashionable yet to speak of defalcating with the spoons, though we may soon reach that point.

Foolscap Papers.

My Horse.

WHEN I look back over the annals of the past few days, I can not forget that I have become the owner of a horse.

I wanted a gentle animal, one which my family could drive, and which would require a pretty big scare, or a keen whip, to be made to run away.

A fellow brought me just such a nag as, he said, I wanted.

It was a very gentle animal, and had so much confidence that the post to which he was tied would not run off and drag him with it, that he went to sleep while we were negotiating for him.

Owner said he was so gentle that he once went to sleep along the railroad, and that was the way he lost the most of his tail, which was a blessing, as he would never get it over the lines.

I asked if he was sound.

The man bristled up and said I didn't think he would cheat me, did I?

I told him of course not, but asked him if horse didn't have the heaves?

Heaves? Certainly he had, said the man. Would you want a horse that didn't have the heaves?

Of course I wouldn't, I said, perfectly convinced.

So I bought him.

Oh, but he was a gentle horse.

I put him in the stable. I was somewhat proud of him, because he looked so innocent. I like to see innocence in any thing.

There was a melancholy expression on his features that went to my heart, and I knew that we'd be friends till death.

I sat down on the manger, and looked at him for half an hour.

So gentle; and he had the heaves! That was so nice!

I kept a diary. I extract.

2d day. Horse this morning is as gentle as ever, and has got the heaves just as well as he ever had; led him out to ride him. I think that, owing to his being in new and strange quarters, he didn't sleep last night (that is sometimes the way with myself); for, while I led him out, and was putting saddle on him, he went to sleep, and fell over against my neighbor's fence, and broke down two panels of it. Discouraging; wouldn't be well enough to ride him in that state, so I put him back in stable.

I fear he may have injured his heaves.

3d day. The horse has a splendid appetite; he eats a bushel and a half of corn a day, cobs and all. A great change seems to have come over the spirit of his gentleness. He begins to show a mean disposition when he is awake; found he had eaten up my wife's side-saddle for the straw it was stuffed with. Started to ride him down-town this morning, and he walked on his hind feet three squares, and then took the spring-halt; that is, he halted and sprung 28 feet. I went off over his head, and lit on the ground, sprawling; horse hastened and picked me up by the waist-band, and trotted off down street; neither my hands nor my feet touched ground, though I struggled wildly. I was a splendid case of suspended animation. He let me drop in a muddy gutter, and climbed half-way into an express-wagon that was going his way. I finally had him towed home at the end of a day, I riding and steering him.

4th day. Horse getting wilder. I lost half a pound of meat when I went to carry him this morning, and I was obliged to finish the job by carrying him with the currcumb on the end of a ten-foot pole. I was bound to break him, or myself, so rode him out, and he waltzed down-street sideways, climbed up some stone steps on the sidewalk, and took the heaves badly and headed me off, rode him home with a hod full of bricks tied to his tail for ballast.

5th day. Tried him in harness, and he evinced a desire to climb into the buggy backwards; took a notion to start and went, touching ground only once in thirty feet; buggy didn't touch ground at all—it didn't have time to—but staid up in the air with wheels whirling like buzz saws. I was badly scared; horse seemed to be after lightning, the buggy was after the horse, and it seemed like the universal gentleman was after us all. He stopped when we got back to the stable, where there was something to eat.

6th day. Horse kicked all the shoes off his feet; ate the manger up. Kicked the hind end out of the stable, and me. Wife says I'll be killed by that horse yet, and that I needn't expect her to remain single.

7th day. Have driven horse all day hitched to a log wagon, and though I had the brakes set, was arrested once for fast driving, and fined. His speed is far beyond Dexter of the New York Sledge.

Hitched him to a non-fence for a moment, and he got frightened and went off with the whole fence, and jerked the lot out of square, several feet.

8th day. This is the only horse that I ever saw that can turn a complete back-hand-spring so quick his rider won't have time to fall off. He did this with me today.

9th day. The mayor has notified me that he intends to order out the 6th Regiment to suppress that horse.

10th day. Horse found in stable this morning with his back broken. It is thought he attempted to walk on ceiling of stable, and lost too hold. People say there is some danger of him getting well. I shall send him to the hospital.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND ARTISTS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepared to publish.—No MSS. prepared for future orders.—Unavailable MSS. promptly returned only where stamps accompany the enclosure, for such return.—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked "Book MSS." MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice must first upon merit or fitness; second, upon excellence of MS. as "copy," third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, bearing of each page as it is written, and carefully giving it its full page number.—A rejected MS. may be resubmitted at a later date. MSS. unavailable to us are well worth of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find us ever ready to give their offerings early attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We cannot use the following, viz.: "Sketches of Frederick II.," "Autumn Reverie," "Max Roth-ermel's Revenge," "One of a Thousand," "A Strange Story," "A Woman's Choice," "O Moon," "The Sailor's Coming Home," "The Cure for Love," "A Captain's Cruise," "The Ledger Light," "Keeping a Promise," "No more to be Found," The serial by E. T. G. are under consideration. The budget of essays by G. H. N. we can not use. "Notes of Travel," by Capt. C. S., are somewhat crude. The poem by H. E. C. are returned unread. We never receive such contributions with such restrictions.

The following contributions we place on the accepted list: "Happy Birds," "The Picked Rose," "Looking Back," "My Friend Jones," "Self-Denial," "A Gracious Deed," "A Plea for the Wrong-Doer," "A Chat," "This, That, and the Other," "True Womanhood," "Mistaken Notions," "Row Strangers," "Children's Rights," "Friendship," "Disaffection," "The Pastor's Crime," "The Hen-House Tragedy," "An Error Corrected."

ROBERT W. P. It is useless to "argue the case" with us. We never permit anything in the paper which does not come up to our standard, or comport with our requisitions.

J. E. M. thinks "Tracked to Death" the best story he ever read. He will like "Death-Notch" as well. Capt. Mayne Reid's "The Picked Rose" is doubtful if he ever returns to this country.

SAVANNAH. The author named is still on our list of contributors, but has written nothing for some time. We hope he will take pen in hand again. We know nothing in regard to the article advertised. Don't invent until you know what you are buying.

HIAMATHA. For our club terms see rates as given elsewhere. The bookkeeping for the smoking of pipe is: Ayow you will not smoke, and—keep your word!

FITCHBURG. We have no faith in man or boy who will sell another's brain-work. We prefer to palm it off as original on others. They are scamps.

CLARA V. Z. No, no! Let no letters pass between you and a stranger. If a man asks you to carry on a correspondence with him, and yet suppress his true name, avoid him, as you would the leprosy.

CHIEFS. We don't know "what are waiters' wages in this city," for the reason that three waiters vary. They may be asked to run from \$20 to \$50 per month—pragmatics thrown in. Hotels and restaurants are the chief sources of employ.

MADISON. If a husband is convicted of crime, that alone is a "good cause" for a divorce. If he deserts her, or refuses to support her, that is "good cause," but in no case is a wife free to marry again until some court formally grants a divorce. Your course, therefore, is plain.

INQUIRY. You can not prevent the growth of beard or moustache. To pull out the hair only aggravates the strength of the growth, and the roots remain in the cuticle. Any acid or preparation strong enough to kill these roots will discolor and injure the skin permanently. Therefore, let them grow.

J. S. C. We never copy from foreign sources, nor use translations. Our serial stories are written expressly for us.

FRANK MITCHELL. Write direct to the chief of New York police, Kelso. We know nothing of the nature of the business carried on at the number mentioned.

P. G. M. T. Nothing improves the voice so much as judicious training; but be very careful not to strain the vocal organs. Great injury sometimes comes from overwork. If you have a good tenor tone it is a valuable possession. Good tenor singers are scarce.

A STUDENT asks us if there is such a thing as white lightning, red lightning, etc., as he thinks electricity has no color. We are prepared to give the color of lightning is orange, white and blue, verging to violet, according to the intensity of the electricity and its altitude. The most common is orange in the air, the whiter and more dazzling is the light. Violet and blue-colored lightning is discharged from storm-clouds low in the landscape.

HESTER SEXTON asks us "What are feet; is a poetic composition?" Hester should consult her grammar or rhetoric, or any good work on versification. We may say, however, the principal feet used in English verse are: the iambus (one long and two short); the dactyl (one long and two short); the trochee (one long and one short); and the anapaest (two short and one long). The usual measure is made up of anapaests and dactyls; but this is varied at the pleasure of the writer, always according to the sense, and the cadence of the verse. Inharmonious verse is a want of such accentuation.

A SCHOOL-GRUL. The name Cella (or Cellia) is an old Roman appellation, and is derived from the Latin cellum (heavenly). Agnes is of Greek derivation, meaning pure, and comes through the Latin agna, a lamb. George comes from the Greek ge, the earth, and ergos, a work, and so means a husbandman.

MARY WEBSTER. To improve starch put one teaspoonful of Epsom salts into each bowl of starch, and dissolve in the usual way by boiling. The starch will render articles fireproof, to a certain extent.

GARDENING. To "preserve" grapes in bunches you must take out the stones from the grapes with a pin, breaking and bruising them as little as possible; then hold some clarified sugar until it is nearly solidified, and then put the grapes in a jar, and pour the bottom of the pan, without laying them on each other, and boil for a few moments to extract all the juice. Lay them in a earthen pan, and after skimming the syrup, pour over the grapes slowly; then boil a minute or two, and put away for use.

BROTHY. There is a very simple method to clean almost any kind of paint, by taking a clean cloth wet in warm water, and dip in best whitening, and a little rubbing will remove from the paint all dirt and grime; then wash with clean water, and rub dry with chambray.

MADAM SCOTT. To drive away the cockroaches, make a thick batter of equal quantities of red lead, molasses and grease, and spread it where the cockroaches may eat, and in a few days the pests will be exterminated.

LONG BRANCH BATHING. To take the tan from your skin, take some warm water, and soak them in water; sprinkle them with alum and salt; then wrap up in paper and roast them in hot ashes; squeeze out the juice and use as a wash for the face.

WESTERNER. To make good New England chowder requires the "sense of science," and to add culinary experiments we give the following recipe: Have a good fish cut in pieces three inches square; put a pound of fat salt pork cut in strips, in the pot, which set on hot coals to fry out the oil; then, take out the pork and put in a layer of fish; over that a layer of onions cut in slices; then another layer of fish, with strips of fat salt pork, and so on, alternately, until you have sufficient quantity. Then mix flour with as much water as will fill the pot. Season with pepper and salt, and boil half an hour. The cook crackers and throw into the chowder five minutes before it is finished.

HOUSEMAID. To remove coffee or strawberry stains from linen, place the article stained over a tub, and pour boiling water on the spot until it disappears.

COOK. To give you the recipe you ask for cleaning lard is impossible, but we recommend the following: To five pounds of lard, take four gold potatoes; pare, wash and slice them; put them in the lard, fry till brown; take them out and pour the lard in a jar to cool, and set it away in a dry place.

WASHWOMAN. To remove mildew, dip the article in a moderately strong solution of nitric acid; then cover with salt and lay in the sun for a half hour; then wash thoroughly, or the acid will rot the fabric.

ECONOMICAL MRS. You can clean your colored silks with the following preparation: Mix equal parts of alcohol, soft soap and molasses; cover a table with a clean cloth, and lay the silk smoothly thereon, and sponge thoroughly with the mixture; rinse in tepid water twice, and once in cold water; then iron with hot iron the silk as soon as taken from the water.

MARTHA BURN. Human hair, when analyzed, contains albumen, lime, sulphur, and magnesium. The color is imparted to it by an oil that comes from the pollen-tubes of the hair.

Unanswered questions on hand will appear next week.

What to Wear.

Gentlemen's Fashions.—Coats and Trousers.—Vests, Gloves and Cravats.—Overcoats, Scarfs and Hats.

For full dress a black coat not very dissimilar to those worn last season is requisite. The waist is about the same length; the skirt a little longer. The collar is unchanged; but the front rolls back in deeper lapels and to within two inches of the waist. Facings may be either of the same cloth or silk. The sleeves are of medium size; cuffs finished with two buttons.

The pantaloons should be of the same color as the coat, and of fine doeskin. There is a marked change in the cut and general appearance. The leg is larger and there is less spring in the bottom.

There are cloth vests to match the coat. The vest must not be longer or shorter in the waist than the coat. For evening wear beautifully-embroidered black silk and satin vests are shown. For a bridegroom nothing is admissible but a fine white silk vest.

White gloves are worn by a groom, and also by his groomsmen. Pale buff, delicately tinted lavender, and tea-colored gloves are worn by others, and considered in better taste than pure white. Two buttons are essential both for evening and dress promenade.

For dress promenade and half-dress occasions double-breasted frocks are worn. They have longer skirts than last season, and a slightly longer waist. Triant and diagonal cloths in great variety are shown for these coats—the fashionable colors are dark blue, dark claret and black. The vest for the promenade suit is of the same color as the coat or in stripes. For the opera and evening calls white duck should be worn.

The trousers for half-dress suits should be of fancy cassimere, light colors for evening wear, and dark for the street.

Business suits come in three pieces, all alike, of the same dark checks, plaids, and fanciful mixtures. The coat is either double or single-breasted, as fancy may dictate, and medium high vest.

The first full overcoats are single-breasted sacks. The Elysian cape coat of mixed Elysian beaver will be worn later in the season.

Midwinter overcoats will of course be of the heaviest materials and double-breasted. Furs will be popular, seal-skin having the preference.

In scarfs and cravats the colors are as endless as those of ladies' dress fabrics. Dark maroon and wine-color will be worn, but Russian gray verging on brown, pale chocolate, serpent and polar blue, sage, frog and serpent green, toad-color, and lizard green, and an innumerable lot of indescribable tints are shown.

Scar rings in a variety of forms are seen, and it is more fashionable to wear a scarf ring than to tie the cravat or wear it in a necker bow like the Windsor and other "made up" ties.

Hats of the stove-pipe style, whether of silk or felt, are more bell-crowned and have a heavier roll in the brim. The front and back of the brim is flat and has the D'Orsay curve. Soft black felt hats are more fashionable than ever.

EMILY VERDERY.

Woman's World.

FALL FASHION NOTES.

Fabrics. Trimmings, Polonaises, Basques, the Double Rubber Bustle, Boots, Gloves, Hats and Bonnets.

ALL-wool fabrics, heavy materials and furs now engross the attention of our ladies. Embroidered gros-grain silks and handsome velvets are seen among the richest and costliest materials for midwinter wear. The figured silks are the departing mementoes of the Dolly Varden mania. They are rich and beautiful, but too pronounced for good taste.

Plain rich gros-grains and failles of the new colors, and in every imaginable shade, are preferred by ladies of good taste to the figured, embroidered or brocaded silks, even for evening wear.

Cashmere is the leading all-wool fabric. It drapes more beautifully than any thing else. It is used more for polonaises and over-dresses than whole suits. The japon

may be of silk, velvet, wool, satin, or alpaca, according to the means of the wearer. Merino and camel's hair cloth rank next to cashmere in softness and beauty.

Velveteen in stripes is brought out for the jupons of suits of the same color; cashmere, merino, camel's hair, Empress cloth, silk, or any fabric suitable, forming the polonaise.

Black alpaca and mohair retain their popularity as standard dress goods. Serges, wool satins and English waterproof make the best dresses for intensely cold weather.

Irish poplin makes a beautiful and economical dress. It is shown in all the new colors and shades. Trimmings are endless in variety. Hercules braids and wide embossed galloons for the heavy materials, passementeries, fringes, laces and velvet ribbons, for silks and cashmires, are shown in all the trimming houses.

Loose polonaises and paletots will be worn more than the tight-fitting garments that have hitherto had their run of popular favour.

Basques of every imaginable shape—plain, slashed on the sides or in the back, postillioned, tab-fronted, long and short—are all fashionable.

Vests and sleeveless jackets are all the rage. Little coquettish bows are made to form an important part in giving a jaunty air to every costume and suit among the fall importations. They are placed indiscriminately, but with a nice taste and taste, all over the costume.

Hoops are worn smaller, and in addition to the hoop it is now necessary to wear a bustle. The best we have seen for giving an elegant shapeliness to the figure are of rubber cloth, inflated with air. Those lately patented ones, formed of two semi-circular sacques or cylinders, one above the other, are the best.

Very high-heeled shoes are now discarded. The buttoned boot takes the lead for street wear, side-laced ones for house and carriage costume.

Two-buttoned gloves are still de rigueur for full dress, at least so say the French fashion journals. Men: Never purchase a cheap glove.

The most striking change in regard to hats and bonnets is the way in which they are worn. The hat no longer covers the forehead, but is thrown back, showing the crimped, waved or banded air, while the bonnet comes further forward, showing a tendency to simulate a hat.

EMILY VERDERY.

Death-Notch, the Destroyer; OR, THE YOUNG SCALP HUNTER.

Or this splendid romance the author writes:—

"It being my last, is my best. Judged by my earlier stories, it is indeed a LONG LEAP AHEAD."

It is the most thoroughly original story of the Wild West that has ever been published in a weekly paper.

Unequaled for its thrilling scenes:

Inimitable for character and plot;

Incomparable in its interest of narrative,

DEATH-NOTCH will assume, at once, a distinctive place in American Border and Indian literature.

A LOTUS-DREAM.

BY EBBE E. REXFORD.

Out on the billow my frail boat is rocking,
While waves whisper low;
Out of the bay, with the land interlocking,
Stilly and slow.
Oh the deep quiet that's round and above me,
And under my feet!
Ah! if I had, now, but some one to love me,
Some heart to beat
Steady and true to my own and the ocean's,
Close to my breast,
What would I care for the world's wild commo-
tions?
Ah! I would rest!
Oh to forever drift out on the ocean,
Two souls alone,
With a true heart, full of love's sweet emotion,
Close to my own!
Lips to give kisses, and say that they love me,
Ruby as wine;
Eyes that outdazzle the blue that's above me,
Looking in mine;
Hair like the sunshine that lingers about me,
Shining as gold!
Ah! I grim old world, you might go on without me,
Fade, and grow old!
Sprites of the ocean, I pray you to find me,
Out of the deep,
Some maiden, fair as this day is, to bind me,
Fast in this sleep.
For I am dreaming that white arms are 'round
me,
Folding me close;
Passionate kisses from scarlet lips drawn me
Deep in a rose!
Oh, let me always drift out on the ocean,
Over the deep,
Lulled by this dream from the cold world's com-
motion.
Oh, let me sleep!

Madame Durand's Proteges;

OR,

THE FATEFUL LEGACY.

BY MRS. JEANNE DAVID BURTON.
AUTHOR OF "STERNLY WISDOM," "CECIL'S DE-
CEIT," "ADRIA THE ADOPTED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER IX.

MADAME'S DISCOVERY.

THE two eavesdroppers stared silently into each other's faces for a second.

Ross flushed and paled and trembled guiltily; but Miss St. Orme, after her first start of surprise, seemed in no way disconcerted.

"Hush!" she whispered, with her finger on her lips.

Mirabel and Ernie were passing out through the ante-room, and the listeners fairly held their breath, lest some slight sound should betray them. Fay turned toward the maid the moment the closing door shut them out, her fair face stamped with a charming expression of innocent wonder.

"Did Madame send you out there?" she asked, being careful to modulate her voice that no tone might penetrate to Madame's ears.

"Why, I thought she had called Miss Durand and Mr. Valere for some secret conference," so I tipped through carefully, as though it had been a powder-magazine in there. I suppose I was mistaken, or Madame would have sent you away out of hearing.

"I didn't want those others to see me, for they might have misconstrued my presence. People are so uncharitable, you know, and so apt to be suspicious without the slightest grounds in the world. That stately Miss Durand might suppose I was trying to overhear what the Madame wanted of her, when I was just simply stealing through to get a close view of that exquisite tumbler, which I could see bursting into blossom over the edge of the balcony. Do you think Madame would let me have just one little spray of those half-opened buds? They're so lovely, and would be perfectly sweet to look back my curls when I dress for dinner. What do you think, Ross? I'm sure you have good taste in such things."

"They'd look very nice, I'm sure, Miss," returned Ross. "Madame's very particular about her flowers, though, and I couldn't say what her mind might be. Please let me pass, Miss; she'll be awful if I keep her waiting."

"Oh, well, don't disturb her with my request, and I'll come myself to see her after I'm dressed. I wish I had you to wait on me instead of that blundering Jean."

Jean was the housekeeper's niece, and quite a rivalry was extant between her and Madame's favorite maid. Ross, gratified but nervous, pushed past with a flourish. "Thank you, Miss," and hastened to the presence of her waiting mistress.

Fay glanced after the prim little figure, and laughed silently.

"A word of flattery fitly spoken," she whispered, in a soliloquy, as she danced lightly out upon the stairway-landing, and back through the passage to her own apartment.

"That simple-minded maid is blind to the straight intent of my object, though, at first thought, she was convinced of the fact that I was listening, as I am of her purpose in hiding among the shrubs."

"What has she in view by it, I wonder? Is she planning to make money out of Madame's heiress, or does she only wish to discover what legacy is left to herself? I'll keep an eye to your proceedings, you melancholy Ross, and trust me to find if you've any particular purpose at hand."

"Oh, Miss Durand! what an idiotic being you are to throw away the chance Madame offered you. Why, I think I would be willing to marry anybody's grandfather, if he were hideous as the fabled beast, for the sake of coming into such an inheritance. Of course, you weren't to blame that the young man refused you, and I rather imagine that 'I am the cause of it,' if you go to the root of his reasons. Very good taste you have displayed, Mr. Valere, in preferring little me to the queenly Mirabel, but your worldly judgment is decidedly at fault."

"I'm infinitely obliged to you both, though, for your generous self-denial, and your Quixotism of honor."

"If I've rightly judged the Madame, she'll never give you an opportunity for another refusal. What a blessing that she's such an unforgiving old wretch; there's no shadow of fear she'll retract in favor of that cast-off grandson they are all so busy pleading for."

"It will be my time next, for I'm near to the old cat as is Mirabel Durand, but I expected that the matter of the name would give her the preference. Oh, fortune is on my side, surely. Heaven knows to what means I might have had recourse, but now my way is simplified wonderfully."

"Catch me refuse any conditions the Madame may impose. If she'd but couple me with that handsome Lucian Ware, and submit the same proposition she gave those other two, she'd never be disappointed by either of us."

"I always did prefer sinners to saints, and if Lucian Ware doesn't belong to the first class, I never saw devilry stamped on a perfect face."

"I can imagine what a glorious face it would be, if softened by the pleading of the great, tender passion. But ah! Lucian—Lucian Ware! you are the man to command love, not to implore it. I don't think I could quite give up my ambitious dreams for you, even—"

"Ah, bah! where am I running to? Not to any idle sentiment, be sure. There's too much at stake for that, just yet."

"Now, Fay, you innocent dove, make your hay while the sun shines. Ah, Mirabel Durand! what complications those conscientious scruples of yours have saved me. 'It's as good as settled now that I am Madame's heiress, just as I intended to be when I consented to come to this dreary Fairview Glen, with its horrid old manse and its capricious old mistress, its miles upon miles of mountainous lands, and its piles upon piles of golden dollars that Madame harvests from it.'"

And with this reflection prompting her, Fay made a bewitching toilet, and tripped away to the Madame's presence with a pale blue silken robe trailing its length in midst of the dingy surroundings which fitted the grim old manse. Only a plain band of narrow black velvet encircled her throat, and her white arms were bare of ornament. All her life Fay had longed for costly jewels to fetter those rounded arms, to circle the pearly neck, and the spark of her strange green-gray eyes rivaled the bright gleam of Madame's diamonds, as she thought of those priceless gems one day becoming her own.

She stopped on the threshold of Madame's room, startled, and staring as though she saw some uncanny sight.

There sat Madame in a great arm-chair, with a dress of crimson-and-gold brocade falling in stiff voluminous folds to the floor. She wore a glittering stomacher, and the rare yellow lace at her throat was clasped by a single immense ruby, which burned like a concentrated flame in the light of the declining sun.

A little stand, drawn to her elbow, held a couple of jeweled caskets, one of them open, with a portion of its contents strewn about. Milly Ross and the housekeeper, Briggs, were in close attendance upon Madame, their faces reflecting dire dismay.

Madame's passion of the afternoon had resulted in this—a very opposite effect from that predicted by Doctor Gaines. Madame's indomitable will seemed slowly to be overcoming the resistance of the stricken powers.

By dint of threat and command, she had made herself obeyed. Through the combined efforts of Ross and the housekeeper, she had been lifted from her couch, and arrayed in full dress, and sat now in the great arm-chair, as has been seen.

Her restless black eyes caught sight of Fay, as the latter paused in the doorway.

"There, babyface, go away before you fall into a hysteria from fright again. You're a victim to nerves. I detest nerves. I'll not have people that are troubled with them, about me. I'll not have an exhibition of them; do you hear, Miss St. Orme?"

"Oh, Madame dear! please do let me come in," cried Fay, coaxingly. "Indeed—indeed, I'll be very careful not to disturb you! I'm so glad to find you so wonderfully better; it is a very great, joyful surprise. Oh, please let me stay."

"Oh, but you'll be going into hysteria from excessive joy next," cried the Madame, grimly.

"No, no, indeed! I never have hysteria, except from some very great shock or terror. You shall tell me if I annoy you in any way."

"Well, come in then," said Madame, growing gracious. "Turn about, Miss Vanity, till I view that becoming toilet you've been spending hours upon, I dare say. It's not complete, Miss St. Orme; where are your ornaments?"

"I was meaning to beg some of those lovely tapers of yours. I have no jewels, Madame; not even of the simplest kind. Mamma and I were so dreadfully poor, you know."

"Oh, dreadfully poor, no doubt," assented Madame. "Pray, how many silk dresses may your wardrobe contain?"

"Let me think," murmured Fay, reflectively. "I have a lovely sea-green satin and a puffed white lace over-dress with it, that's my best; then, I've a white moire, shot with gold, from last season; my rose lace and this blue, a gray foulard made from one of mamma's; and some common blacks and browns, but they are horridly shabby."

"You're to be pitied, Miss St. Orme," said Madame, gravely. "I really don't see how you contrived to exist with that meager supply. I suppose you have some other dresses?"

"Oh, yes; India muslins, and cambrics and organdies, a silk tissue, and two common prints. I've a tarlatan that I wore once over maize satin—that might do here, though I never could have worn it again at my uncle's. I've some of Japanese goods, too, and summer silks—"

"And no jewels!" broke in Madame. "Pitiable case! I hope your uncle never put you on short rations?"

"What?" asked Fay, opening her eyes with a sudden comprehension that Madame's grave sympathy was covert sarcasm.

"You had enough to eat?"

"Of course. You're laughing at me, Madame Durand; but, indeed, my wardrobe is nothing, compared with my cousins'. I'm glad I have all those dresses, Madame, for they will last me a long time here."

"Of course," assented the Madame.

"Now, my dear Madame," coaxed Fay, "may Ross bring me the flowers I asked for, and may I look at your jewels? Oh, what beauties!"

"No, Ross may not break so much as a single stem," said Madame, positively. "I can't prevent you looking at those gewgaws if you wish to, since they are plainly in view. Here, Milly Ross, open the other casket for me; empty it in my lap—so."

With a cry of delight Fay went down upon her knees before the Madame.

"They've not seen the light for twenty-five years," said Madame, in croaking monotone. "Not for twenty-five years, until today. And they are bright and mocking now as when I shut them away."

"No, I'll not despoil my rose-tree to set off your babyface beauty, Miss St. Orme. Here's something that will please you better, and the Durand jewels will never miss it."

Madame lifted a slender gold chain with an emerald clasp, in her feeble hand. Fay's eyes had contracted to narrow green points, whose gleam was concentrated on the glit-

tering heap which shone against the background of Madame's rich brocade.

She drew her gaze away with a wistful sigh, as she accepted the old woman's gift.

"So very, very kind of you, dear Madame Durand. Oh, it's lovely; but see, it does not match my dress. I can't wear an emerald with blue, you know."

"Put it on," said Madame, peremptorily, "it matches your eyes. They're green—green as were Rosalie Durand's. There's a bracelet, too—ah! here. Clasp it on Miss St. Orme's wrist, Ross."

Fay extended her hand, and Milly Ross snapped a glittering coil upon the smooth, white arm. It was a serpent, with quivering, golden scales, and emerald eyes that caught a baleful light from the late sunshine streaming into the room.

"Oh, how deliciously horrid," cried Fay, as she delightedly surveyed her new acquisition. "Oh, you dear Madame Durand! how can I ever thank you enough?"

A grim smile settled down upon Madame's face.

"Fit to be a descendant of Rosalie Durand," she muttered, *seto voce*. "Cold-blooded, I perceive; treacherous, I know."

"I'm tired of you, Miss St. Orme," said she, changing her mood abruptly. "You can go contentedly, for I'll give you nothing more now. Put the jewels all away, Ross. Ah! what's that?"

Madame was passing her hand slowly through the glittering heap, and had lifted a gold ring, which seemed solid, but barbaric in its heavy breadth. Her wavering touch must have come into contact with some hidden spring, for the apparently solid band fell suddenly apart, disclosing an inner ring, the existence of which she had never known.

The concealed ring was a band of delicate gold tracery, studded closely all the way around with tiny alternate amethysts and pearls.

"Odd!" said Madame. "Of all the Durand jewels, many as they are, this is the only piece I have never worn. Put it on my finger, Ross; I've taken a fancy to this mysterious ring."

And Ross obediently slipped the circlet on Madame's finger, then replaced the jewels, and locked them fast in the strong-bound caskets.

CHAPTER X.

A COMPACT.

A MAN whose figure was ill-defined in the deep shadow, leaned against the wall of the old room tower.

It was ten o'clock at night, and the moon was up in full silvery radiance; but there was cumulous foliage at the foot of the tower, deep abutments too, and the moss-grown remnant of a crumbling wall, that shut the flood of light completely away from the spot where the man stood waiting.

Not patiently waiting, it would seem, though his head was drooping, and his mind intently at work. He changed his position with irritable frequency, or paced back and forth by the side of the ruined wall.

He advanced a few steps to listen, and a ray of moonlight revealed the face of the young law-student, Lucian Ware.

At the same instant the prim little figure of Madame's maid came into view from the corner of the manse, and approached noiselessly to his side.

"At last," said Lucian Ware, holding out his hand. "I almost despaired of your coming; I've been waiting half-an-hour, Milly."

He spoke in a tone of plaintive reproach, and held her thin little hand close in his grasp.

"Ah, Milly Ross! Then this is the secret of your spying upon the Madame—the eaves-dropping beneath the window. That was a part which your own simple honesty of itself would never have assumed; but the subtle power of handsome Lucian Ware has blinded you to the fact that you are only a cat's-paw in his hands, and you are lending yourself a tool to his machinations, fancying that you are to be rewarded by *laurels*. Ah, simple Milly Ross! you have yet to learn that the love of Lucian Ware is a bane that is to cast a blight on more than you alone."

"It is just then," replied the maid. "But, oh, Mr. Lucian, I had given up the hope of coming to-night. I feared I should have to disappoint you."

"Disappoint me!" he echoed. "I'd not have slept a wink this night. But now tell me, have you found out any thing?"

"I've done precisely as you wished me to do," said Milly. "I've kept a watch on them all, and now you shall hear every thing which I have learned."

Thereupon Ross entered into the minutest details of all that had occurred at the manse after his departure on the preceding evening. The relation embraced Madame's conviction that she had been warned of her inevitable fate by the specter of hapless Rosalie Durand; all that transpired during her interview with the lawyer; the private audience with Miss Durand and the young agent, Valere, with every circumstance pertaining to it; and at last, Madame's freak of the afternoon for which her passion had given her strength, and the favor into which she had suddenly taken Fay St. Orme.

"The doctor came at six," said Ross, nearing her conclusion, "and you never saw a man so took aback. He says he can't understand at all how Madame escaped her death, in consequence of her imprudence; and when she told him of her warning, blustered out of her sight to declare that she couldn't have an enemy determined to take her life with greater chance to succeed than her own rashness promised now."

"He ordered her to bed, but Madame refused to go, and laughed in his face at his fears for her. I believe she would have made him help carry her in her great chair down to dinner, but he got in such a rage about her not obeying his orders that she was afraid he might put arsenic in her tea."

"She sat in state till after the clock passed the stroke of nine before ever she would consent to be undressed again. Briggs staid to sit with her then, after she'd been put to bed, while I came out to get rid of the headache I'd got from the fright when I supposed Miss St. Orme had found me out. It's lucky she didn't suspect but the Madame had sent me there."

Milly Ross, naturally shrewd in many ways, was unsophisticated with all, and Fay's semblance of perfect innocence had misled her completely, as the young lady intended it should. The mind of Lucian Ware had compassed a truer understanding, but he had no thought of undecieving his companion.

"I must hurry back or the Madame will be vexed again, though all her anger now seems to do her a world of good. She'll be well in a week, if she keeps going in such rages and mends as fast as she's done today."

"It'll not be much of a blessing to you—the capricious old termagant!" said Ware. "Oh, but the Madame's been kind to me in her way!" cried Ross. "She's full of whims, and odd, and hard to please sometimes, but I wouldn't for the world that any harm should happen her. I'd be glad to see her up strong and well again."

"Oh, you're a forgiving little mortal," retorted Ware, lightly. "Now I hate the Madame for her arrogance, and for her supercilious patronage. In any one else I'd rather admire her invincible will, and her total lack of sentimental feeling; but in her it always rouses my aggressive spirit. What, going, little one?"

"Yes, I must go," answered Ross, but still lingered.

"Oh, not for a moment," said Lucian, dropping his hand carelessly upon her shoulder. "I've more work for you still, faithful little mouse. Must I ask if you are willing?"

"I hope it's not to play the spy again," hesitated Ross, timidly deprecating. "Any thing else—oh! you know I must do any thing that's not a sin that you might ask of me, Lucian!"

But, anticipating the knowledge which I must have in a short time all the same is not a sin, you conscientious little Puritan; you should know that I'd never ask any thing positively wrong of you. Yes, I do want you to spy upon Madame, but for only this one time. I want you to watch when the lawyer comes to draw up her will to-morrow, and discover, if you can, who she makes her heir. There'll be legacies, of course; you will have one, and I don't see why I shouldn't be remembered, too. You'll be sure to find it all out for me, Milly?"

With a half-regretful sigh, Ross promised, for she could refuse him nothing.

"I knew you would," he said, taking her hands in his strong pressure. "One kiss, sweet, there, good-night!"

So much tenderness was more than he had often given her; the young law-student was fastidious to an extreme, and the plain, grave little face of Milly Ross had no single charm for him, hypocrite and dissembler that he was. But she, thrilling with the delight of his caress, and ready now to do his bidding without questioning, gilded silently back by the way she had come.

Ware folded his arms and still remained standing in the shadow of the tower, lost in deep reflection.

"It's plain enough that Madame will leave every thing to Miss St. Orme," he thought, in soliloquy. "She declared it her intention to make one of these young girls her heiress, and beautiful Mirabel has angered her beyond all hope of future favor."

"The little St. Orme is on the look-out for her own prospects, too. No such innocent pretext as satisfied Ross drew her into hiding behind that dingy curtain."

"And the warning which has frightened the Madame so, I think, if truly solved, would reveal the little schemer *en costume* according to the portrait of Rosalie Durand. She must have got hold of the superstition and Madame's belief in the verity of the apparition, and is working out some plan of her own without a doubt."

"All very well, clever little Fay, but I wish it had been the queenly Mirabel I used. It is Madame's heiress I have it in my mind to win, and if you are destined to bear that distinction, you are the full worthy mate for Lucian Ware!"

He broke from his reverie, and turned away from the neighborhood of the grim old tower. Unhesitatingly he trod the curving path which led away from the north facade to the side-gate opening on the rugged footpath which was the shortest route to the village. At this late hour he had little fear of encountering any of Madame's retainers, or in that case could readily account for his presence.

Before he reached the last turn in the path, the gate changed, and some one advancing at a rapid swinging gait faced Lucian in another moment.

"North!" said the latter, in recognition. "What's the row now—any thing new in the crochets of the boss?"

"You'd do well to stay at hand to study his mind yourself, Mr. Lucian," answered Mr. Thancroft's clerk. "I've enough to busy me at my desk without meddling where I'm in no way concerned. By the way, there's Scranton's writ to be made out yet to-night; Mr. Thancroft ordered it and the copying that's back to be taken to your room with instructions to have them ready when we open to-morrow. I hope you'll be prepared with the writ, for it's important."

"Then I won't, if it's any satisfaction for you to know it. I wouldn't do drudgery to-night if it was for the Governor of the State. I say, where are you going so late?"

"To the manse with a packet of instructions for Mr. Valere. I've been detained."

"See here, North," said Lucian, persuasively. "I'll promise to do your errand faithfully enough, if you'll attend to those law-papers instead."

North hesitated.

"You're so uncertain, Mr. Lucian."

"Oh, then, maybe I'll mend," returned Ware, gayly, knowing that he had carried his point. "The packet, North!"

Rather reluctantly North placed it in his hand, and turned on his solitary way back to the village.

"A good enough fellow," muttered Lucian, "but too straight-laced by far, and with a private pick at me since he fancies I am making love to his sweetheart. Patience, patience, good North! You'll be welcome to your pale-faced Ross after her work of to-morrow."

With quick steps he retraced his way up the graveled walk to the front of the manse.

The great entrance-door stood wide, and the gray-haired butler sat in a hall-chair just within it. To him Lucian delivered the packet.

"You're late," said he, lounging against the piazza-railing. "I feared I'd find you all shut up."

"I'm only waiting for it, sir," replied the butler, grumblingly. "It's from bringing giddy young misses here that'll upset us all. It's clear the Madame wasn't sound when she did it; this awful thing has been working with her for a long time, I misdoubt."

"The young ladies have not retired?" interrogated Ware.

"One of them has but just come in from Lord knows where—moon-gazing, I reckon. She's there yet, and it's her I'm waiting for."

The old man nodded his head in the direction of the glass door opening into the parlor, and Lucian perceived a glimmer of light through the curtain which shrouded it within.

Crossing the piazza, he tapped lightly, and straightway entered the presence of Fay St. Orme.

"Mr. Ware," she said, with a start, and a perceptible brightening of color.

Lucian bowed, and his keen glance made note that her slippers were soaked and her silken robe dragged with the summer night's dew.

He was sure, then, that she had been a witness to his meeting with Ross.

"You make a good spy, Miss St. Orme," said he, smilingly; "but I am a better General. What do you say to winning the day by a union of forces?"

"Agreed," said Fay, unhesitatingly, extending her hand as a seal to the compact.

For a second these two plotters dropped their habitual masks, and read through each other's eyes the reckless depravity of moral natures prepared to brave any consequence in gratifying the ambitious vanity which swayed them both.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 134.)

The Wronged Heiress:

OR,

The Vultures of New York.

A WEIRD ROMANCE OF THE GREAT METROPOLIS.

BY RETT WINWOOD.

AUTHOR OF "THE WHITE SPECTER," "WHO WAS SHE?" "RAFFLED; OR, THE DEBENTHIAN PROPHECY," "THE DANGEROUS WOMAN," "TWO LOVERS," "MILHAM BELLS," "TOMMY'S SECRET," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXI.

A WILD RIDE.

DICK DAREDEVIL, clinging desperately to the springs of the carriage that was bearing Gilbert Belmont away from the gambling hell, after considerable effort managed to crawl a little higher up, and was enabled to grasp hold of the straps, to which he clung as if for dear life.

"This isn't the pleasantest position imaginable," he muttered, with a grimace, as a sudden lurch of the carriage brought his head violently in contact with the wooden back. "But I guess I can stand it, for the time being! Julia sent me to look for the strange girl, and for her sake I'd be willing to have the breath knocked out of my body a dozen times over."

The poor dancing-girl had one true friend, it would appear.

After what seemed an age to Dick, crouching upon his uncomfortable seat, the carriage left the city sights and sounds behind, and entered a winding country road.

"I'm sure that Jocelyn was right," Dick said to himself, when he remarked this fact. "Belmont is going straight to the country house where this Mabel Trevor is detained as his prisoner."

As the intrepid fellow sat with both ears open to their fullest extent, at length he heard a slight—a very slight tapping on what seemed to be the glass front of the carriage.

This sound was repeated. Then a subdued voice from within the carriage asked, anxiously:

"What's the trouble, James?"

The speaker was evidently Belmont himself.

"Hush, master," whispered another voice, this last coming from the driver's box. "I wanted to tell you that there's a man clinging to the back of the carriage."

"Damnation!" Then, after a slight pause, Belmont went on to ask:

"When did the fellow get up?"

"Within three minutes from the time when we started. I didn't say any thing before, because I thought he would drop off ere this."

"Give him a taste of your whip."

"All right."

Every word of this conversation, though carried on in a half-whisper, and while the carriage was still in motion, had reached Dick's wonderfully acute ears. He had barely time to prepare himself for such a demonstration, when the driver's lash cut the air within three inches of his nose.

"Who's that?" he growled, with a drunken bellow, taking his cue instantly. "Can't—can't—hic—you let a feller alone?"

Thick bushes shut in the road on either hand; but James must have been very familiar with the road, for, despite every obstacle, the carriage dashed on at a spanking pace.

After the lapse of about fifteen minutes, it was suddenly drawn up in a large and gloomy yard.

"Here we are," cried Belmont; and he prepared to alight.

As for Dick, he glanced sharply about him, that chill foreboding of ill throbbing more painfully than ever at his heart.

What he saw was a dark, low house, half-hidden in forest-trees, and presenting an aspect strangely desolate and forbidding.

Of course he could see nothing very distinctly, having only the faint starlight to aid his vision. But the deep silence that pervaded everywhere was enough, of itself, to have appalled the bravest heart.

He did not hesitate for one moment, however, but dropped from his precarious perch, and threw himself, at full length, in the rank grass until Belmont had passed him by.

Scour the horses, James, and come in at once, the gambler called out, after having advanced five or six paces. "You can call up Pete, and send him out to groom them."

"Yes, sir," said James; and his voice seemed husky to Dick, as if he were trying to repress a laugh.

Nevertheless, the intrepid young ball-dancer followed Belmont to the house, only waiting for the latter to put a safe distance between them ere he himself set out.

Let the risks be what they may, he was determined to find out whether Mabel Trevor was in that house or not.

James was still busy with the horses, and so, for the present, Dick had only the gambler himself against whom to be on his guard.

He stole noiselessly up a grass-grown path, and mounted two or three rickety steps that led to a porch.

Not a sound smote upon his ears, save the soft sighing of the wind among the tree-tops.

The house-door was right before him, and to his joy he saw that it was standing wide open.

The passage within was pitch dark, and looked gloomy as the mouth of Erebus.

He knew that Gilbert Belmont had gone in at that door. After a moment's hesitation he determined to follow him, and trust to Providence to guide his steps aright.

He crossed the threshold, and put out both hands to grope his way along the passage. Ere he had advanced a single yard, however, some heavy object was brought down with resounding force on his head and shoulders.

He staggered, and fell like a log on the floor.

At the same instant a shrill yell of triumph reached his ears, and Belmont's dark figure darted past him, and out at the door.

A moment later, the carriage could be heard dashing down the lonely road.

Dick's senses had not been utterly knocked out of him. He realized enough of what was transpiring to know that he had been outwitted—played with from first to last—and that Belmont was escaping him.

But he was too dizzy and weak to attempt pursuit.

He lay very still, just as he had fallen. At least two hours wore on, and daylight would soon appear. Suddenly, to Dick's infinite surprise, he heard a fresh rumble of wheels, and a second carriage soon rolled into the yard.

It could scarcely be Belmont returning, for why should he return at all? Who, then, was it who had found it necessary to take a night's journey to this lonely spot? The house must be, wholly deserted, for Dick had not heard or seen any indication of human presence during the two long hours in which he had been recovering from the blow he had received.

His curiosity was, thoroughly awakened, and he crept into a deserted dog-kennel, near the sloop, from whence he hoped to watch events undiscovered.

He had scarcely ensconced himself in this singular refuge, when he saw two men leap from the carriage and approach the house, bearing the motionless body of a third between them.

CHAPTER XXII. MABEL AND BELMONT.

It will be remembered that, on leaving Old Het's establishment at Slaughter-house Point, the hapless girl had been pounced upon by some unknown foe, and borne to a carriage that stood in waiting.

The action was so sudden, so utterly unexpected, that Mabel could not offer the slightest resistance.

Besides, the muffling cloak which had been thrown over her head in the first instance, would have stifled her cries; in fact, it was intended that she was half-asphyxiated when her captor saw fit to remove it.

"This was not until the carriage began to roll away at a speed, that must have defied pursuit."

The instant she was released the poor girl gasped faintly, and fell backward among the cushions. Consciousness had left her.

"Good," muttered Belmont. "Now I'm not likely to be troubled with the shriekings of my beauty until we are clear of the city."

He reached forward and touched the passive face of the girl; then drew back, and went on speaking.

the carriage and over the motionless figure of poor Mabel.

Then up went the glass, and Belmont was free to contemplate at his ease the marvellous beauty of his captive.

At last she moved, heaved a deep sigh, unclosed her eyes and fixed them in a wild, startled look upon the face of her companion.

"Where am I?" she asked, faintly.

"With one who is bound to protect you with his life," was Belmont's ready answer. Her searching gaze relaxed not in its intensity when these words were spoken. A low cry fell from her lips. She suddenly remembered what had happened—how she had been escaping from Het Bender's cruel clutches when she had been seized and forced into this carriage.

"God help me," she murmured.

Belmont gently took her hand. "Do not fear, sweet lady," said the artful scoundrel. "I am your friend. You shall never be taken back to the wretched hole from which you have just escaped."

She still looked distrustful and frightened.

"Where are you taking me, sir?"

"To a place of safety."

"I wish to go back to Woodlawn. Oh! for mercy's sake, take me there," she pleaded.

Belmont lowered the lids of his eyes to conceal the gleam of pleasure that came into those tell-tale orbs at these words. They revived his suspicion in regard to Mabel's identity.

Here was an opportunity not to be neglected of knowing more of her. If he knew exactly who were her friends, he could the better guard against them.

"Are you sure—quite sure," he said, insinuatingly, "that it would be safe for you to return to Woodlawn?"

"It would be safe," replied the unsuspecting girl, "if I could only see Mr. Lauderdale himself. He would protect me. I should go directly to him, and tell him all my story, and how friendless I am."

"You think you have some claim upon him?"

"Yes; but I know not of what nature."

"He is a relative, perhaps?"

For answer, Mabel briefly recounted what had been told to her by Granny Wells in the old hut in Berlin.

Belmont listened with a show of interest that was not wholly put on. He began to realize that he had secured a richer prize than he had, at first, imagined.

"Mrs. Lauderdale, if I mistake not, is your greatest enemy," he said, after a minute's reflective silence.

"Yes; Mrs. Lauderdale and the two ruffians who took me to Old Het's house."

"Have you no friends?"

"Only one," she answered, blushing.

"Who is he?"

"Philip Jocelyn."

After what he had witnessed at the garden gate that night at Woodlawn, Belmont was partially prepared for this answer; but he could not repress a start, and a frown of displeasure.

"I would not advise you to trust too implicitly in Philip Jocelyn's friendship," he said, gruffly.

The tone in which these words were uttered awakened Mabel from her dream of fancied security. She looked wildly and imploringly into the dark face of her companion.

"Who are you?" she asked. "Are you truly my friend?"

"Have I not said so?"

"Yes; and I wish I might believe you."

"You may," he said, smiling now.

"You are a stranger to me; I have never seen you before to-night."

"But I have seen you, sweet lady."

For some minutes Gilbert Belmont watched her silently from out the corners of his bright, dark eyes.

"Listen to me," he said, at last. "You had better resign yourself to the inevitable, like a sensible person. This seems a strange kind of wooing, but circumstances compel me to adopt it. Were you free to choose, you would laugh my pleadings to scorn, and smile only on Philip Jocelyn. But you are not free to choose. I have determined to make you my wife, and my wife you shall be, in spite of man or devil."

The man was more than half in earnest. His ambitious schemes, in part, had led him to make love to Marcia Denvil on several occasions—one of which is well known to the reader.

Since, listening to a portion of our heroine's history, he had begun to doubt if those same schemes would not be more successfully realized if he made Mabel herself his wife.

Hence this sudden change in his intentions.

CHAPTER XXIII. HEDGE HALL.

Poor Mabel remained silent and almost motionless. Her mind was filled with a thousand evil forebodings.

She did not believe he had the slightest wish or intention of making her his wife. But she wronged the clever villain. What ever may have been his intentions in the first place, his purposes evidently had undergone a change.

That she was in some manner allied to a family of influence and high standing was evident, as Mrs. Lauderdale would never have taken such desperate steps to get rid of her. To wed the beautiful girl might not be a bad move, since then he could the more readily sift to the bottom the mystery of her relations with Mr. Lauderdale, if, as he guessed, she was related to him. Should it prove that she was not a born heiress, he could readily shake her off when she was likely to become troublesome.

While these thoughts were coursing through his active brain, the carriage rolled on through the darkness at a speed which spoke well for the quality of the horse-flesh.

Presently it passed through a gate and was pulled up before a large but gloomy-looking house, surrounded by a high hedge.

Belmont leaped to the ground, and then helped Mabel to alight.

"Let me welcome you to Hedge House," he said, airily.

The poor girl shuddered as her hand touched his, but she submissively yielded to his guidance.

"Sweet girl!" he chuckled, hurrying her toward the house, "you will soon be safe in the nest I have provided for you—safe from Mother Het and all her crew."

He rung the bell, and after waiting at least five minutes, was gratified by the appearance of a middle-aged woman, quite prepossessing in appearance, who crossed the hall with a light in her hand, and unlocked the door.

"Is it you, Gilbert?" she asked, starting back at a gesture of unfeigned surprise.

"Of course it is."

"I did not know that you were coming home to-night."

"Humph! Stand aside, Mrs. Pratt. Don't you observe that I have brought back a guest with me?"

"Yes, yes," the woman said, hastily.

"You are to take very good care of her, Mrs. Pratt. In fact, she is to have the best, and the securest room in the house."

Belmont laid a peculiar emphasis on his concluding words.

"Ah, ha! I understand. Every thing shall be as you wish."

Mrs. Pratt leaned forward as she made this remark, and peered curiously into Mabel's face, by the light of the lamp she carried.

"Lord love me!" she cried, sharply.

"Who are you?"

"Her name is Mabel Trevor," replied Belmont.

Mrs. Pratt looked bewildered. "I've seen that face before," she said, thoughtfully. Then a sudden exclamation broke from her lips.

"Good heavens! I know now of whom it reminds me."

Belmont felt pleased, but tried hard not to betray his pleasure. "Hush!" he said, sternly. "Have done with such nonsense. Take the girl to her room. You know which one?"

"The blue chamber, I suppose?"

"Yes. Now be off. And see that you lock the door securely. I wouldn't like to wake up in the morning to find that my bird had flown."

"Trust me to look after her," responded the woman.

She took hold of Mabel's hand and led the unresisting girl up a flight of stairs to a large, luxuriously-furnished chamber known as the "blue" room, from the prevailing color of its adornments.

"I don't. You recognized her, last night."

Mrs. Pratt shook her head.

"I only noticed a resemblance to some person with whom I was acquainted at one time."

"To whom?"

"That person is dead."

"To whom?" repeated Belmont, dashing his hand angrily upon the table.

The woman turned pale, but she dared not refuse to answer him.

"The first Mrs. Lauderdale!"

"Ah, ha!" Belmont started; his black eyes sparkled. "And so my dainty Mabel resembles the first Mrs. Lauderdale?" he said, after a long silence.

"Strikingly."

"How do you know?"

Mrs. Pratt hesitated, and seemed more reluctant to reply to this question than to any that had preceded. "I lived with the first Mrs. Lauderdale as nurse-maid," she answered, finally.

"Indeed!" Belmont rubbed his hands together, and smiled slyly to himself.

The sudden determination to which he had come the night before, while sitting in the carriage with Mabel and listening to her pathetic story, had been unexpectedly strengthened by the few words Mrs. Pratt had let fall.

"You must treat pretty Mabel as though she were of royal blood," he said, presently.

"Of course."

"Keep her a close prisoner, but see that she wants for nothing."

"Yes."

He rose and unlocked an escritoire that stood in one corner of the apartment, then took from a secret drawer a small casket of jewels.

"What do you think of these?" he said, throwing open the casket as he again approached the table.

Mrs. Pratt threw up both hands.

"Diamonds—real diamonds!" she cried.

"Of course they are diamonds."

"I never saw such beauties."

"They are unusually fine. Present them to Miss Trevor with my compliments, when you take up her breakfast."

Mrs. Pratt drew back, staring at him in real dismay. "Surely, Gilbert," she ventured, "you don't mean what you say? You won't be so foolish as to make the girl so costly a present?"

"How dare you meddle in my affairs?" cried Belmont, angrily. "By what right do you pretend to dictate?"

She bit her lip. "I may have a right of which you little guess, Gilbert."

"Eh?" He fixed his bright black eyes on her face in a stare of genuine amazement. "What do you mean, woman?"

"Nothing, nothing."

She turned away her face to hide the strange pallor that had crept into it. But the thin hand that rested upon the table shook like a leaf.

"Never mind," said Belmont, in a gentler tone of voice. "I'm off now. Be sure that you execute my commission, Mrs. Pratt."

"Yes, sir."

"Say to Mabel that business calls me to the city this morning. But I hope to be able to pay my addresses to her to-morrow."

"Yes, sir."

Washington smiled faintly. Tim Murphy was a privileged character, and the General allowed things from him no other man could have attempted.

"Hamilton," he said, turning to the handsome colonel, "you'll have to tell our friend Tim that I can't allow him to remonstrate with me."

"Tim," said Colonel Hamilton, gravely, "you hear what the General says. If you didn't want Mr. Barbour tried, you shouldn't have made such an accusation against him as you did at Philadelphia, before the Judge Advocate."

"Arrah now, colonel dear, how can a poor fellow remember all he says?" said Tim, ruefully. "It's myself that wad like to cut me tongue out for hurin' the unfortunate creature; but as I said, I, colonel dear, I suppose, I must stick to it, though it's never a time I feel so much like lyin' to save a friend."

Here the Commander-in-chief turned his grave, majestic face round on the other, and spoke severely to the scout.

"Murphy, it is never right to lie. See what lies brought another soldier to! Do you hear that band, sir, and do you know what it is for? Timothy Murphy, tell the truth, and leave the rest to God."

Tim bowed, and crossed himself reverentially.

At that moment the solemn, mournful strains of the Dead March sounded through the camp, mingled with the deep roll of muffled drums, and all in the tent involuntarily stopped to listen.

The Dead March it was, indeed, with its grand bass chords and long solemn strains, announcing a funeral.

Go, Hamilton, attend the funeral," said Washington, in a low voice. "It is a duty hard enough for me to have signed the order. Poor lad! So young and so gallant! Oh! Arnold! Arnold! The world will curse your memory for years untold, when they pity the poor lad that your treachery led to a felon's doom." Mr. Barbour, retire to your quarters. I will send you the order. Timothy, I put him in your charge. Go, gentlemen, go. The sound of that music is like the knell of my own son."

The usually stern and impassive chief of the Revolution seemed to be strangely moved, as he waved them away from the tent. Indeed, the kind heart and indelible justice of this great man often cost him a severe contest to preserve his self-control.

With all the tenderness of a woman, the General-in-chief possessed a sense of overpowering necessity for sternness, which made his life as a military commander one long struggle.

And he had, that morning, signed the order for the execution of the sentence passed upon Andre by a general court-martial.

That sentence was death by hanging.

And the Dead March was beating for the funeral of the man himself.

Washington hurried his companions out of the tent, and then sat down and buried his face in his hands, shaking with emotion, when all alone.

The judge had condemned.

The General signed the death-warrant.

Washington, the man, wept in the silence of his tent for Andre.

CHAPTER XXXIII. THE LOST STAR.

WHEN Everard and his companion stood outside of the tent, the camp below them presented a solemn appearance. All the troops were drawn up in front of their company streets, and all with reversed arms.

The strains of the funeral march came nearer and nearer, and they could see the escort slowly pacing onward toward them, the butts of their muskets upward in front, the muzzles trailing behind. The instruments of the band were covered with crape, and behind them followed four soldiers, bearing a coffin.

And behind the coffin, listening to the funeral march played for his own death, came the poor prisoner himself, Major Andre.

The tears rushed into Everard's eyes as he saw the calm, pale face, and heroic bearing of the unfortunate officer.

"I might have been there," he thought to himself, "but for the mercy of God; and had I not recognized poor Andre, he might now be safe and in honor."

Major Andre was dressed in full British uniform, for the British commander had obtained leave to send him in all the necessities he required, under a flag. As he passed Everard he looked up, and his eye met his. Everard bowed low, and Andre returned the courtesy gravely, holding out his hand.

The escort marked time for a few minutes, for the prisoner was treated with every possible lenity, consistent with the execution of his sentence.

Everard hurried forward and grasped Major Andre's hand warmly, saying:

"Major Andre, I sympathize with you from the bottom of my heart. Had the fortune of war been otherwise, I might be in your place."

"Sir," said Andre, gravely, "I forgive you. You have played a bold game, and you have won it. I have lost, and now I shall soon pay my losses."

He waved a courteous farewell, and Everard shrunk back into the crowd of staff-officers, who were gathered to see the funeral.

There were many stern looks and sour faces turned on the young officer, as he went toward the quarters of his regiment. It had been rumored about that he was a double deserter, who had tried to win his way back to favor by information of British movements, and such characters had but little favor among honest soldiers.

Everard heard more than one muttered remark.

"There's young turncoat, curses upon him!"

"Don't notice him, gentlemen."

"His own regiment won't associate with him."

He went slowly back toward the quarters assigned to him. They were in the rear of his own regiment, next to the guard-tent. Tim Murphy tried to console him, but he felt very much dejected. After all, his trials, to be so treated by his old comrades was very hard.

What the staff-officer had said was true. His own regiment would not associate with him. He was compelled to stay in his tent, considering himself under arrest, with the consciousness that he had not one friend in the army, except, perhaps, poor Tim Murphy. The honest ranger was very much cast down about the effect of his own ill-considered accusation, two years before.

Double-Death: OR, THE SPY QUEEN OF WYOMING.

A ROMANCE OF THE REVOLUTION.

BY FREDERICK WHITTAKER,
(GAUNCE POINT.)
AUTHOR OF "THE RED RAZAR," "THE KNIGHT OF THE BURNING," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A GREAT MAN'S ANGUISH.

A TALL and peculiarly majestic-looking gentleman, in the uniform so dear to our eyes in the portraits of WASHINGTON, sat in a tent by a table about ten days after the capture of the unfortunate Andre, and before him stood Everard Barbour, once more in the uniform of his old regiment. At the opposite side of the table sat a slightly-framed gentleman with a remarkably intellectual and handsome face, in the dress of a Continental colonel.

Tim Murphy, the Irish ranger, stood not far from Everard, and the chief was speaking to the former in his grave, quiet tones.

"Murphy," said the General, "Mr. Barbour has just come in to report, and it will depend upon your testimony whether he be restored to his place in the army and promoted for important services, or cashiered for desertion to the enemy. Two years ago you testified that you found the Lieutenant in the valley of the Genesee, in the power of the enemy, and that he refused to escape, and remained with them, when you knew that both of you could have got off easily. Do you stand to that story now? If so, Mr. Barbour, I must order a court-martial upon you at once. You have rendered important services of late, but they can not outweigh a single act of desertion."

"Your excellency will confer a favor on me by ordering a court-martial," said Everard, quietly. "I have but few witnesses to call, and must depend on my own statement to a great extent. Murphy, I know, will tell the truth, but I can show even him that he is mistaken."

"I hope you may, sir," said Washington, kindly. "Your position has been a hard one, I know, Mr. Barbour, and I am disposed to be lenient with you. But, sir," he added, gravely, "when you remember what is taking place to-day, you will see that I can not afford to be partial to my own officers, when I am compelled to be so severe on those of the enemy."

Everard bowed gravely. He knew what was meant by his chief.

Tim Murphy seemed to be oppressed with great grief, for the tears stood in the eyes of the stout ranger.

"Arrah now, General," he began, pleadingly; "don't be too hard on the poor young lieutenant. Sure, and if he did desert, he's come back to us again, and he's been the manes of turnin' out the bloody thafe, Arnold, bad scran to him. And sure yer excellency wouldn't have the heart to try him now, after what he found out for ye in the British camp?"

With the warm-hearted impulsiveness of his race, he began to blame himself for having said so much under the influence of his misapprehension; and yet, as Everard pointed out to him, he had a little reason for trusting the latter now as he had for once accusing him of desertion.

"There are only two people who know the truth, Tim," said poor Everard; "and they are both in New York. I must stand my trial and trust to my innocence to clear me of the charge of desertion."

"And, besides, I know you him two people was," said Tim, "I'd bring 'em here and make them tell the truth. Innocence is a good thing, liftin' it, but witnesses is better, bedad."

"And those witnesses I can not get, Tim," said Everard. "The one is my own father, and the other—I can not name her on my honor as a soldier."

Tim made no answer, and Everard relapsed into gloomy thought.

As he listened to the mournful strains of the Dead March, it seemed as if it were beating for his own funeral, and he shuddered as he thought of poor Andre. Presently the music ceased, and he knew that the gloomy procession had arrived at the place of execution. A solemn hush pervaded the camp, and Everard could almost hear the beating of his own heart.

Then there came a wild wail of mournful music from the band, and the sullen boom of a gun announced that all was over.

Everard buried his face in his hands, and at the same moment heard the clattering spurs of an orderly dragoon approaching the tent. There was a knock at the canvas door.

"Come in," said the prisoner, and he saw the bright brazen helmet and high boots of the soldier at the entrance.

"Orders for you, lieutenant," said the man, respectfully, and he held out a folded paper.

Everard took it. As he had expected, it was a copy of his charges, and one of the order to hold a general court-martial, to try him for "desertion to the enemy."

He looked round for Tim Murphy. The scout was gone. In another moment he was left alone in the tent to reflect on his position.

The trial was ordered for the next day, and he had not one witness.

Tim Murphy did not come back all day, and night found him still absent.

CHAPTER XXXIV. THE PRESS-GANG.

DURING the British occupation of New York, from the very nature of its surroundings, it was much exposed to a species of predatory and partisan warfare, carried on by both sides, in boats. At first these boats had been simply used by smugglers, who found it very advantageous to run in loads of fruit, vegetables and meat to the beleaguered city, cut off as it was from all open communication with the country round by the American militia. With fresh provisions at extravagant prices in New York, while silks, teas, cotton goods and cutlery were imported there free of duty, the temptation to illicit traffic was extreme, despite of State laws and Continental military orders. The British encouraged the traffic, as it insured greatly to their advantage, and encouraged the spread of Toryism by the benefits received from Government.

But the profits of this smuggling traffic speedily grew so heavy as to entice many more into it than it could accommodate. The American officials found it demoralizing their people, and attempted to suppress it. Armed boats cruised about in the night, capturing and seizing goods and boats in large quantities. The British, on their part, fitted out other boats to fight the Yankees, and the smugglers armed themselves.

The consequence, as might be supposed, was desperate and frequent encounters around New York, up the North and East rivers, and all the way to Long Island Sound by Oyster Bay. Landings were frequently made by the patriots, who, as all through the war, were prone to the most desperate enterprises, and not unfrequently entered the city of New York itself, in disguise, to carry off some wealthy Tory from his home.

About a week after the execution of Major Andre, on a dark night, when a fog hung over the river, and a drizzling rain from the east made every thing wet and miserable, a long low boat slowly silently out of a dense bank of fog toward the rickety docks on the east side of the city. The boat was sharp at both ends, of the kind called whale-boats, very long and narrow, and pulling sixteen oars, while the bow and stern were crowded with figures. The oars made no noise as they dipped in the water, for the blades were heavily muffled in strips of blanket, and the usual noise of the rowlocks was entirely absent. As silently as a dark ghost the mysterious boat moved over the face of the waters, the only sound audible being the sullen slap! slap! of the little waves against the worm-eaten timber of the docks beside which the boat was stealing. The faint web-like outline of the spars and rigging of several large ships could be seen above the low-hanging mist through the drops of rain, showing the presence of several men-of-war, but the boat, low down in the fog, was quite unseen by the Englishmen.

At last the bows of the dark-looking craft swept inward, and she pulled into an open space between two of the docks, only to be hailed by the hoarse challenge of a sentry, one of a chain that surrounded the water front of the city.

"Boat ahoy! Who goes there?"

"Pressgang, from the Vulture," answered a low voice from the stern of the boat, with a strong Irish accent. "Now don't ye be talkin' soger dear, or they'll all hear ye, and we won't get a man to-night."

"Ye can't pass, widout the counterguard," responded the sentry, with an accent equally pronounced. "One of ye come up the steps and whisper now."

The sailors in the boat tossed and shipped their oars simultaneously, and a single figure, short and sturdy, swathed in a pea-jacket, and wearing the gold-banded cap of a midshipman, ran lightly up the steps to the sentry, and whispered a word in his ear.

"Counterguard erect. Pass all," said the sentry, as he shouldered his piece again.

"Come on, liftin' it's all right," said the Irish midshipman, beckoning. A slight-looking officer, wrapped in a sea cloak, rose up in the stern sheets, and came forward. He gave some directions in a low voice to the men in the boat, and four of them rose and followed him, moving slowly,

ly, as if they were burdened with some great weight of weapons, as indeed they were, although all were hidden.

The officer had a remarkably handsome and intellectual face, and his voice had the clear, precise accents of an educated man, as he said to the sentry:

"My good fellow, we are going to a house not far from here, and when we come back we shall have several prisoners. If you're off duty before our return, tell the relief, will you, so that we may have no trouble."

"Yes, sir," said the sentry, respectfully. He was used to having navy officers come ashore at all hours with the same mystery now observed. In those days, when Britannia ruled the waves, she found it very hard to get seamen to submit to the brutal treatment of the "officers and gentlemen," who made their boast of flogging a man every twenty-four hours. So scarce had they become, that bounties wouldn't fetch them, and the press-gang had become a standing institution, picking up men wherever they could be got, by the simple process of knocking them down with a club, and putting handcuffs on them.

Such a gang as this, to all appearance, was the one just landed, containing lieutenant, midshipman, and twenty or thirty men. When the officer and his first party of four men had got to the end of the dock, the first midshipman made a signal, and four more left the boat and sauntered up the dock, while he himself brought up the rear with four more, leaving about a dozen in the boat. The latter was immediately pushed out into the middle of the dock, to the end of the painter, and kept there, with the men sitting by their rowlocks, as if ready to start any minute.

The officer and his party, straggling in irregular groups, strolled along South street, from the end of the old Fly Market, near which they had landed. The midshipman gradually shifted up alongside of his officer, and whispered to the latter.

"Colonel, we're almost there, I know where to find him. He's got to say it's blissful night, so the man could me, and he's to mate the rest of the b's down at Jim Grogan's rum-cellar. It's round then ext corner, sir."

"Very well, Murphy," answered the officer, in a low tone. "Take your measures as you think best. The General tells me you can be trusted. I don't know much about this kind of work."

"Well, sir," said Tim—for he it was—"if yer honor will take for men and stop here so as to take any one that tries to run out this way, I'll go in and see if he's inside. If not, we'll have him asy as he comes down."

"Very good, Murphy," said the officer, resignedly. "Don't be long. I tell you, I've not much faith in this kind of work. You say you know Champe."

"As me own brother, liftin' it," said Tim; "and, bedad, he'll know every one else in this town be this time."

And Double-Death moved off up the line of Old Slip, at the end of which was a very famous cellar, known as Jim Grogan's, a favorite place of resort for army and navy officers. Double-Death was followed by his men in detached groups, and he stationed at the different corners of Queen street, in such a manner as to intercept any one coming there. Then, with the cool assurance for which he was noted, he sauntered into Grogan's, in the midst of a crowd of officers filling the place with a damp, steamy atmosphere of wet cloaks and hot rum punches. The advent of a short midshipman in such a crowd of notables was entirely unnoticed, and Tim sidled about here and there at his ease, searching for the figure of the traitor Arnold. It was indeed him that they were after, these bold men who had penetrated into the heart of New York, and now were in the midst of their enemies; and the commander of the party was none other than the gallant Hamilton, Washington's adjutant-general.

It had been learned that Arnold was about to depart on an expedition to ravage the South, and a sergeant of Washington's body-guard, a man of great size and strength, named Champe, had volunteered to go into the enemy's camp, on the pretense of desertion, and do his best to kidnap Arnold.

Tim Murphy soon descried the tall form of Champe himself, surrounded by British officers, who were questioning him jeeringly about the numbers and discipline of Washington's forces. Champe kept up his character of a deserter very well, and made light of the Americans and their commander, to the high gratification of the half-intoxicated Britons.

Murphy got as close to him as he could, and caught a glance of Champe's eye that told him he was known. But nowhere could he recognize the dark, stern face of General Arnold, although there were many other general officers in the place. A scrap of conversation that he caught revealed the cause of this after a while.

"So, Philips doesn't sail to-night," said an officer of Grenadiers to one of the naval service standing close to him. "What's the matter, Briggs?"

"How the deuce can a man sail without wind?" responded the other. "There's not enough, while this fog lasts, to lift a pocket-handkerchief."

"I'm not sorry for my part," said the first. "I hate to see a good officer like General Philips compelled to associate with that blackguard, Arnold. If I was Sir Henry Clinton I'd send the hoind back where he came from, for his friends to deal with. Poor Andre was worth a thousand such paltry traitors as he. What has he done for us, I should like to know, after all? Nothing, but take our money, and get Andre hung, d— him."

"Well, it's no business of mine," said the second. "They don't sail to-night, and I see that the fellow keeps close in his own house."

Tim had heard all he wanted. Arnold was not coming. He sidled away from the group, and found Champe talking to a stout, red-faced man in sailor's dress, to whom he was talking in a loud voice, as if on purpose to attract attention from Murphy. The scout listened attentively.

"Yes, Mr. Barbour, your son has been tried," said Champe. "They began the trial the day I came away, and I guess he'll swing. You see, he deserted to the enemy, the same as I did, and they're going to pay off all they can on them they catch. They don't catch me, ye know."

John Barbour seemed to be perplexed and downhearted about something.

"It was all my fault, sergeant," he said, in a low voice. "The lad never meant to

desert, but I enticed him away. In fact, he was a prisoner."

"Can't help that, old cock," said Champe, coldly. "He was all right so long as he didn't get taken prisoner by the Yankees. What a blasted fool he was, anyway. D'ye think I'd let myself be taken, when I know what I'd get?"

John Barbour turned away without answering, and Murphy watched him closely. A word was sufficient for the astute scout. He knew who was before him, and it came into his mind at once that there was a good substitute for Arnold, who might be made the salvation of his unfortunate friend, Everard.

Tim had not been idle in the latter's behalf all the week. He had been all the way to Bemis' Heights and back to procure evidence, and here was more, if he could secure it.

He sidled close up to Champe, and asked:

"Who's that, sergeant?"

"John Barbour, the Tory spy. Get him, if you can," he muttered.

No more words were necessary. Murphy edged away through the crowd toward the door, keeping his eye on the burly figure of John Barbour. The latter looked sad and downcast, as he well might, after the news he had heard. With all his faults, John Barbour was devotedly fond and proud of his son, and the news of his capture and trial had cut him to the heart.

He took a seat near the entrance, and made absent or gruff replies when addressed by any of his numerous friends, and at last, as if unwilling to be bothered any more, rose and went out.

Tim was after him in a moment, and followed him out. The street was quite dark, the mist and rain heavier than before, and the scout perceived the dark groups of his confederates on the opposite corners. John Barbour took his way down the slip toward the dock, walking slowly, as if buried in thought. Tim uttered a low whistle and followed him.

At the sound of that whistle the waiting groups broke up, and concentrated on the unconscious Tory till close to the dock. Then Tim stole up behind him, drew a short iron club from his pocket, clapped the other on the shoulder, and said, in a low voice:

"Mr. Barbour, ye're my prisoner."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 127.)

Cross-Purposes.

BY JENNIE DAVIS BURTON.

It was a very ordinary, matter-of-fact combination of events which brought about the engagement between Colonel Eldred and his ward.

George Raynor had been beneath his care in that capacity for three years, between his fifteenth and eighteenth birthdays, and graduating from the fashionable school where she had passed the interim, found herself a dashing, clever little damsel, with nothing more substantial than her good looks and her guardian's generosity as provisions for the future.

Colonel Eldred was brought to a realization of the fact when his ward announced her intention of applying for a situation in a young ladies' school.

"You see, Guardy," said she, "it's absolutely necessary for my happiness that bread-and-butter and beefsteak should be limited in my daily rations. Others may exist on sentiment and weak tea, but I'm a sound little animal, with a healthy appetite that don't relish ramby-pamby edibles. I don't pretend to say I particularly fancy that sort of life—I'd certainly prefer seeing something of society—but beggars mustn't be choosers, and I really can think of nothing better until my prince comes over the sea."

Colonel Eldred stared at first and remonstrated, but George silenced him with most conventional axioms.

"Of course I couldn't live in your bachelor establishment, my dear Guardy. I wouldn't be proper, and penniless young ladies are obliged to be very circumspect. If you were married now—"

And with the words came floating through the colonel's mind a shadowy conviction that it was the duty of bachelor guardians to end their charge by marrying them. As for his own case, he stared at George, who was a pretty little Gipsy, with puffed hair and pink morning-wraps, entirely too dainty to assume the arduous duty she was proposing.

Well, to shorten the story, the colonel proposed an alternative upon the spot, with a vague idea stirring that he was making a martyr of himself. And George accepted him, arguing that to obtain an indulgent husband, with an elaborate establishment and complete liberty, was better than drilling little girls in rudimentary branches. Thus it came about that Colonel Eldred procured an elderly lady chaperon, and carried his betrothed away to the summer resorts. They did the springs and the mountains, then settled down at Nahant for the six weeks which remained of the fashionable season.

It was here that George was thrown into company with Ned Revere, and became dimly conscious that a husband who is simply kind and attentive, an establishment and liberty, are not quite sufficient to meet a woman's realizations of perfect happiness. She found herself in her dreams haunting a humbler station than her guardian's standing justified, and Ned Revere was the masculine deity who lighted with his presence those lowly halls.

An unwarrantable state of affairs this, but George was fairly snared before she realized her danger.

It was at the hop of the season that the truth burst upon her with such a flood of revealing light, that she shrank inwardly from the miserable being she saw herself depicted as her guardian's wife.

She was standing near him, awaiting some one who had engaged her hand for a coming dance, flushed with the conscious triumph which the knowledge of looking well and gaining admiration will superinduce. She was flattered too by the perceptible flutter among the fair revelers which followed the movements of her bridegroom-elect; for Colonel Eldred was regarded as an eligible catch in this gay, butterfly world of fashion. That he had been bored was quite evident; such scenes had long since worn off their pristine freshness for the grave man of thirty-seven. He was leaning languidly against a slender flower-wreathed column, alternately watching the dancers and letting his eyes wander away through the vista of opening rooms,

where a stream of promenaders circled, and admiring groups gathered around some central object of attraction.

Colonel Eldred's face lighted with an expression of interest as he leaned forward to touch his youthful betrothed lightly upon the shoulder.

"Look, George—quick! Who is the young lady beneath the arch of the doorway yonder?—the one in something which looks like green sea-waves shining beneath their caps of white foam. You cannot mistake her—the lovely blonde with a face pure and sweet as we do not often see amid such a frivolous throng. There, Revere has joined her just now."

George looked and saw—she saw Revere greeting the blonde beauty with a warmth and evident pleasure that sent a discordant thrill like a pang straight to her heart. Under such circumstances a woman is sure to grow vindictive, and George was no exception to her class.

"Ah, I presume you refer to the lady in green satin, with white lace overdress," said he, smilingly. "No, I am not acquainted with her. I think I don't quite subscribe to your estimate of her loveliness; though perhaps I may be prejudiced. I generally consider persons with such fair hair and transparent complexions as quite inane-looking, though willing to yield to your superior wisdom in this case, of course."

A brighter color tinged the cheeks of the lovely blonde opposite; but as her long-fringed lids drooped over the wonderful violet eyes, George smiled, with a twinge of jealousy, that Revere had been whispering compliments. Her heart would have beaten, and her pulses throbbed with a different emotion, had she known that her own remark had been carried to the ears of its object during a lull in the storm of music which filled the rooms.

During the evening the fair blonde was presented, and George, meeting the frank, sweet glance of the violet eyes, was won to involuntary admiration and confidence, despite himself—the more willingly, perhaps, that the fair beauty was Miss Ada Revere, and cousin to Ned, which accounted for his warmth of greeting.

Realizing of a sudden where her flight of fancy carried her, George checked herself angrily, but was restless still beneath the curb. What right had she—another man's fiancée—to resent the attentions which Ned Revere might pay to any of the young ladies who thronged Nahant?

In the fortnight which succeeded the hop, the two girls became inseparable friends.

"Do you know," said George, in a burst of confidence, one morning, "I thought I wouldn't care to know you when I saw you first. I'll not pin my faith to first impressions after this."

"I know," smiled Ada, "but I made liberal allowances, although I am an inane-looking person, with fair hair and transparent complexion."

"You heard that? I was heartily ashamed of myself as soon as I had uttered it. To tell the truth, I was vexed, I—"

"Was jealous—tell the truth," laughed the other. "And that opens the way for somebody's cause I have been commissioned to plead. Ned does nothing but grumble nowadays, my dear, at the manner in which you persist in avoiding him. He sends an invitation for you to drive behind those magnificent grays of his this afternoon, and I incline to believe that the drive is only a cloak to cover a certain revelation he purposes making. Let me take a mountain of comfort to him in the assurance that you will go."

Ada was frightened into anxious solicitude as George turned pale and trembling, with a pitiful quiver about her lips and the burden of unsaid tears gathered wearily in her dark eyes.

"Oh, I am a wicked little monster!" she said, with a gasp. "But, indeed, I have tried to discourage Mr. Revere. I'm engaged to my guardian, Ada, and—Oh! I'm so miserable!"

With that George rushed away, not seeing that Miss Revere, in her turn, grew faint and agitated. On her way to her room she met her guardian, who stopped her to inquire if she intended joining a party who were making ready for a bath in the surf; it was noticeable of late that he was never far away from her.

As he feared to trust me out of his sight," thought George, bitterly. "I never occurred to her that the companionship of Ada Revere exerted any influence to attract him."

Now, with a timid thought of appealing to his generosity, she put the question:

"Guardy, do you think there can be any excuse for a person already engaged permitting himself to care a great deal for an acquaintance he afterward makes—so much, indeed, that the last may seem preferable to his fiancée?"

Colonel Eldred stifled his gaze in a disconcerted way, but answered promptly:

"Certainly not; the great trouble is that people don't regard engagements seriously enough in these days."

"It's plain there's no chance of his letting me off," whispered George to herself, despairingly.

And the colonel, watching her retreating form, mused, forlornly.

How transparent I must be when a mix like that reads me so clearly! Meant to give me a hint that she'll not relinquish possession, I presume; well, a fool must abide by his folly, they say."

From which we infer that Colonel Eldred was playing at cross-purposes with his ward.

Half an hour later a numerous party were plunging in the surf, and apparently gayest of the gay was George, who darted hither and thither, drawing forth peals of merriment by her absurd antics and witty bon-mots.

"She is not herself," thought Ada Revere, watching her. "She is in a perfect fever of excitement. George doesn't touch wine, or I might think—"

She broke off the reflection, to call out, sharply:

"George! George! Take care—the swell will take you."

"Too late! A great wave breaking over, washed back, sweeping the reckless girl far out seaward."

Ada, who could swim, struck out in pursuit, but the waves buffeted with her feeble strength, and it seemed ages before she reached the point where the other had disappeared. The salt brine was in her eyes, blinding her, but she had a momentary glimpse of a white face sinking beneath the surface of the sea.

With almost a superhuman effort she darted forward and clutched her friend, and succeeded in bringing her up. With a thrill of despair she felt that her strength would desert her in another moment, but in less time Colonel Eldred was at her side, and a half dozen others in his wake.

"I saved her—for you," gasped Ada, as she relinquished unconscious George into the colonel's arms.

And the first words which George uttered on coming back to life might have been deemed ingratitude to her preserver.

"Why couldn't you let me die?" she said.

"I wish you had."

As luck would have it, Colonel Eldred heard her, and her hopeless tone threw a new light upon her question of the morning. All impatience, after the usual fashion of his sex, he made his way at once to her side.

"Is life worth so little as my promised bride, George? Do you wish to take the promise back again? Don't hesitate, little one, if it is so."

It was so, and Colonel Eldred gained his freedom, but did not keep it long, if we may judge from the fact that two hours after his ring was sparkling on the finger of Ada Revere.

And George, though not recovered sufficiently to ride behind those magnificent grays, found herself equal to the ceremony of receiving Ned, and listening to the torrent of protestations he had ready to pour forth.

It is necessary to add that there was a double wedding a few months later, and that the lovely brides were duly complimented in Jenkins' report.

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UNLUCKY.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

The moon was dark when I was born,
A fact at which I long have wondered,
And if I had one evil star,
I am quite sure I had a hundred.
I long have been the sport of fate,
The prey of every wind and weather;
My fortune always has been ill,
And we've not traveled well together.

I never nursed a dear gazelle,
But it would kick me in the eye hard;
I never had a nice mistletoe,
But 'twas the very first to dye hard.
I never knew a pretty girl,
Who hadn't any great big brother,
But when I came to love her well,
She was the first to wed another.

How vain are all ambitions hopes,
And idle all worldly wishes!
I never had a hope fulfilled,
Nor any luck when I was fishing.
The ventures I have sent to sea
Have all been lost beneath the billows;
I never loved a tree or flower,
But they were killed by caterpillars.

I've uncled by the score or more,
And every one of them is wealthy;
Alas! it's only me that's ill,
And every one of them is healthy!
I never had a line of gold,
To glad me more than any clothing,
And I'm fashionably well,
But in the wash 'twould shrink to nothing!

I never had a hat to fit;
I never had a boot to suit me;
I never had the dullest friend,
But he was sharp enough to cut me.
I've been well off in life and bolts,
In happiness I've been quite poor;
I put my cash in stocks and bonds,
And got an acute quinine can't cure.

I never borrowed any sun,
On the promise to pay each penny;
Of patience I have quite a lot—
My creditors they hadn't any.
I never desired to be a lord,
But what she thought my wish importunate;
And that's the only thing in life,
I think, in which I have been fortunate.

Wild Bill, the Dead Shot.

BY LAUNCE POYNTE.

A young man, mounted on a fine, dark-chestnut mare, and heavily armed, drew rein at the banks of a little stream that ran through the rolling prairies of Iowa, close to the borders of Minnesota, toward the close of the civil war.

And yet the young man seemed to be quite easy in his mind, as he allowed his mare to drink, and looked abundantly able to take care of himself. His was a face and figure not often met with, even on the prairie, where nature forms men in the finest of molds. Over six feet in height, rather slender and graceful than heavily built, there was yet a compactness of frame about him that told of great strength and activity. His keen blue eyes shone from under the broad hat, as if it would search the beholder through, and his long, brown, curling hair might have roused envy in many a lady. The heavy revolver in his girth, two in number, and the short Sharp's rifle at his back, would have told his name to a trapper of the frontiers, for such was the armament without which William Hitchcock, better known as "Wild Bill," never stirred abroad. Among a class of quick and sure shots, Wild Bill was king, and the marvelous accuracy of his aim had often been proved, to the sorrow of those who ventured to quarrel with the handsome rover.

When the mare had finished drinking, Wild Bill reined her up, and turned his course toward one of the prairie islands, that lay at no great distance. A thin column of smoke was rising from its center, and the borderer threw his rifle to the front and laid it across his knees ready for use, with the caution that never forsook him. He imagined that he was coming to some emigrant camp, and felt some surprise at people traveling in such a disturbed state of the country.

As he approached the island of timber the sudden clatter of hoofs startled the mare, as a pair of horses, with the harness still hanging about them, dashed out of the bushes, and galloped off toward the smoke. Instantly Wild Bill caught up his rifle.

"Something wrong, by hokey!" he muttered, and galloped after the horses as they tore through the trees.

In a few minutes he gained the other side of the *mesquite*, where it was separated from the broad prairie by the little stream, and a ghastly spectacle met his view.

An old man with long gray hair lay on the bank of the stream, with his body half in the water, to all appearance dead, while beyond him stood a large Conestoga wagon all in flames, past which the affrighted steeds were coursing at full speed.

The borderer cast a keen glance around the neighborhood before he spoke a word, and then rode into the water and looked sharply at the dead man.

Dead he was, he soon saw as he came nearer, for the water was all red around him, and he perceived the cause to be a small hole close to the old man's head.

Near him, in the water, floated his hat, and Wild Bill stooped from his saddle and picked it up.

There was a name in the lining, which the borderer read aloud, with a cry of surprise and incredulity.

"Jonathan Sturges! Darn me if that ain't Judge Sturges of Dubuque, as people say has such a pretty daughter. Gee-hosh-aphat!"

He galloped up to the wagon and looked carefully at it. All the light tilt was in flames and nearly burned through, but he could see at a glance that the wagon was empty.

"By gosh, they've carried off the girl," he muttered, and immediately turned his horse. A broad, plain trail of many horses was there, leading out of the timber directly west, and at a little distance off the two runaways had stopped, and were curiously looking back at him. Wild Bill noticed that both were handsome, well-conditioned horses, and wondered that they had not been carried off by the Indians.

He came to the conclusion that they must have been loose at the time, and too swift for the Indians' horses, if Indians they were who had done this deed.

"But, ain't, Injuns as did this," he muttered. "They'd 'a' scalped the old man. And if it's white men, I'm goin' to ketch 'em."

And without another word he rode off on the trail, at a walk.

The runaways at first seemed inclined to go still further, but when they noticed that he did not increase his pace, they slackened theirs, and finally, when the mare neighed

out a welcome to them, both came trotting up within a few yards, when they hovered round her.

Wild Bill took a long look all round him to see that the prairie was clear, and then slung his rifle at his back. He slowly uncoiled the lasso at his saddle-bow, and then, with a dexterous jerk, cast it over the head of the nearest horse, capturing it cleverly.

The animal made but little resistance, yielding at once, as soon as it felt the restraining cord tighten, and Wild Bill drew it up close, when he dismounted and took off all the harness from the animal, except the headstall. The other horse was even easier to catch, and was treated in the same manner, when the hunter sprung upon him, barebacked, leading the other two horses.

"Now then, if I don't catch ye," he muttered, "it'll be because ye've got flyers."

And away went the daring borderer, single-handed, on the trail of at least twenty horsemen.

He rode at full speed, sparing nothing of the animals. He knew that when one was exhausted, the next would seem to be perfectly fresh, when he mounted it, and he wished to keep his favorite mare untired for the melee he expected.

In this way he rode about two hours on the trail, broad, plain and recent as it was. He knew, from the state of the wagon, that the murderers could not have more than twenty miles start, for wagons burn quickly. And yet it was fully two hours before he saw the game he was after.

Then he descried a number of moving dots ahead, which speedily resolved themselves into horsemen at a gallop, and he knew that he was gaining on them.

"Gosh! They must have rid fast," he muttered, as he threw himself off the horse he had been riding, onto the back of the next, without stopping—a feat the more easy as the two were running close together, like sworn comrades.

The effect was at once perceptible in increased speed. The horse relieved from his weight dashed on as fast as the other two, and it speedily became evident that he was gaining fast on the horsemen, who had no such help. Within twenty minutes more they saw him and halted, while a party of

ried her preserver a year after, and still lives to attest the truth of her rescue from the Prairie Outlaws.

Mohenesto!

Trap, Trigger and Tomahawk.

BY HENRY M. AVERY,
(MAJOR MAX MARTINE.)

IX.—Indian Customs and Dress—Lodges—Indian Discipline—A Difficult Language—Marital Relations—The Medicine Lodge—Counting the Cows—Initiating a Virtuous Woman—Social Life—The Religion of the Indians.

Among the Indians marriage is a sort of promiscuous institution. When a fellow likes a squaw, he merely makes the father a present—sometimes of a pony—sometimes four or five dollars in money—and takes the girl. They live together as long as they like, and then separate or trade off with some other couple, or the Indian sells his wife outright for what he can get. I have seen an Indian stake his whole family on a game of cards, and losing, go away satisfied with the result. The children go with the mother; and the more children the better, because every person in the tribe draws an annuity of from one blanket to one hundred and sixty dollars a year from the United States Government.

In summer all under four or five years of age go entirely naked. The older boys wear breech-cloths of buffalo-skin, and the girls wrap themselves in robes or blankets. I never saw an Indian who was naturally deformed, nor have I ever seen one who was an idiot. "Only in the centers of civilization, the bee-hives of the human race, are the helpless little ones thus smitten. Herbert Spencer describes the British laws as 'those twenty thousand statutes which every Englishman is supposed to know, and which no Englishman does know.' Relentless Nature is like the State. She presumes every man to know her laws; she pardons no one for his ignorance; she inflexibly punishes every disobedience. Nay, severer still, she visits

grieved husband cares to wield the lash; but if the whipper draws blood, he loses his own life. The woman is punished in different ways, sometimes killed outright. An American writer saw one chief punish his wife by placing the muzzle of his gun over her crossed feet and firing a bullet through them both.

One of the most interesting of all Indian ceremonies is that of erecting a medicine-lodge. These lodges are for the exclusive use of the medicine-men, prophets and dreamers to hold their deliberations in. They are erected every year, usually in the month of May, when the whole tribe are assembled at the festival, which ceremonies are continued for seven days. Before the poles are raised the medicine-men select from the multitude a warrior whom they deem qualified to assume the functions of a medicine-chief. The man they select is compelled to serve; no excuse that he can offer will be accepted as valid. He is then taken to a lodge-pole and lashed to one end; an eagle's wing is placed in each hand, and a whistle between his lips. Thus equipped, he is hoisted a distance of forty or fifty feet, until the pole assumes its perpendicularity and is adjusted in its proper place. Raising the first pole is analogous to laying the corner-stone. The first one being hoisted, the requisite number of others are raised into their places, until the whole space is inclosed. They are then covered with green buffalo-hides, descending to within five feet of the ground, the inclosure being left open at the top. About one hundred and twenty hides are generally required for the purpose, and a space is thus obtained capable of holding from seven to eight hundred persons.

When the lodge is completed, the medicine-men and other functionaries assemble the most distinguished braves within the building for a rehearsal of their achievements, and an enumeration of their *coses*. Each brave then gives an account of his exploits, and the medicine-chief, exhibiting his marks, pronounces the warrior's statement correct, and confirms it by his record. This ratification each warrior passes through, and there is seldom any discrepancy between his statement and the re-

path secret is associated with the ministrations, and also many other fearful ceremonies. Very few Indian women ever aspire to such honor, but the one who does succeed in her ambitious project is an honored participant in the sacred service of the Deity through life; but where one succeeds a dozen fail, and the failure entails immediate death.

All Indian women are considered by the men as menials; they are most always reconciled to their degradation, and the superiority of their braves is their chief subject of boast. They are patient and unambitious; plodding along in the same path their mothers have before them, although there are rare instances in Indian life of women manifesting superior talent and making their influence felt upon the community.

It is a custom rigidly observed by nearly all tribes that, when a son has drawn the blood of an enemy, for the first time, the father shall distribute all his property among the band to which he belongs, always reserving his own relations in the distribution. Another traditional memento is to paint a chief's coat with an image of the sun, and hang it in the top of a tree, together with a scarlet blanket, as an offering to the Great Spirit, for the continuance of his favorably regards.

It is not generally supposed that the Indians have any religion; such, however, is the fact. Every writer on the subject of Indian customs has something to say about the "happy hunting-grounds," where all Indians hope at last to arrive, without intimating that the Indian has any idea of a *dark corner*.

The first of the modifications of the general tradition respecting the abode of the spirits of evil, is still to be traced among all the aboriginal tribes of North America. That excellent man, William Penn, who appears, with some singularities, to have united in his character as much moral goodness, natural eloquence, and legislative wisdom, as ever fell to the lot of any one, has sufficiently noticed this fact in regard to the American tribes, in his account of the country, addressed to the "Free Society of Traders of Pennsylvania," drawn up from an extensive and actual survey, and constituting, so far as it goes, one of the most important and authentic documents we possess.

"These poor people," says he, "are under a dark night in things relating to religion; yet they believe in a God and immortality, without the help of metaphysics; for they say there is a great king who made them, who dwells in a glorious country to the southward of them, and that the souls of the good shall go thither, where they shall live over again." And it is on the faith of this description that Pope drew up that admirable and well-known picture of the same tradition, that occurs in his Essay on Man, and is known to every one.

"Lo! the poor Indian, whose untutored mind,
Sees God in clouds, or hears him in the wind;
His soul proud Science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk or milky way,
Yet simple nature to his hope has given
Beyond the cloud-topp'd hills, an humbler heaven:
Some safer world in depth of woods embaced,
Some happier island in the watery waste;
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fond torment, nor Clutch'd etherial gold."

The Indians are firm in their belief in the doctrine of immortality, and a life beyond this life; yet they can not tell why they believe. Beset, as the world is at all times, with physical and moral evil, and doubly beset as it is at present; while virtue, patriotism and piety are bleeding at every pore; while the sweet influence of the heavens seems turned to bitterness, the natural constellations of the zodiac to have been pulled down from their high abodes, and vice, tyranny and atheism to have usurped their places, and from their respective antecedents, to be brooding in the gloom of the earth, the face of the astonished earth; is it to the worn-out traces of tradition, or the dubious fancies of philosophy, that this important doctrine is alone intrusted?—a doctrine of equal importance to the red-man and the white, and not more vital to the hopes of man than the justice of the ever-living God.

To the natural man, the Indian, who sees in stones a sermon; whose litany is the great hand-book of nature; who knows no chance save heaven's high dome, the veil is drawn aside; the mysterious truth is engraved on pages of adamant, on brook, and tree, and running water; on every thing he sees.

It tells him in words that can not lie, that the soul is immortal from its birth; that the strong and inextinguishable desire we feel of future being, is the true and natural impulse of a high-born and inextinguishable principle; and that the blow which prostrates the body and imprisons it in the grave, gives pinions to the soaring spirit, and crowns it with freedom and triumph. But this is not all; it tells him, too, that gross matter itself is not necessarily corruptible; that the freedom and triumph of the soul shall hereafter be extended to the body; that this corruptible shall put on incorruption, this mortal immortality, and a glorious and beautiful reunion succeed.

By what means such reunion is to be accomplished, or why such separation should be necessary, the Indian has not the most remote idea, for they know not how the union was produced at first. There are mysteries that yet remain locked up in the bosom of the great Creator, and are as inscrutable to the sage as to the savage, to the philosopher as to the school-boy; they are left, and perhaps purposely, to make a mock at all human science; and, while they form the ground-work of man's future happiness, forcibly to point out to him that his proper path to it is through the gate of humility.

One common character runs through savages of every kind. The empire of the heart is divided between two rival deities, or rather demons—Selfishness and Duty. The chief ministers of the first are lust, hatred, and revenge; the chief ministers of the second are cruelty, credulity, and superstition. Look where you will through the world you will find this description apply to barbarians of every age and country.

It has been my fortune to visit nearly every tribe of Indians on the continent, and I find that their religious belief is substantially uniform through all the unmingled races. All believe in the same Great Spirit, who is to reward them according to their merit; all have their prophets, their medicine-men, and soothsayers, and are all alike influenced by the appearance of omens—such as an eclipse of the sun or moon, or a meteoric shower; thus leading to the belief that the original tribes throughout the continent, from Florida to the North Pole, have sprung from the same origin, and still retain, in a greater or less degree of purity, the social condition of their primeval founders.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 129.)



WILD BILL, THE DEAD SHOT.

six or seven men came riding back to intercept him.

"Keep on that way and I'll kill the whole caboodle of ye," said Wild Bill, coolly, as he galloped on. Within a quarter of a mile he suddenly halted, stripped off the bridles of the two runaways and turned them loose. They had done all he required. For the work to come, his old mare was necessary.

In a moment more he was on her back, riding leisurely toward the strangers, who on their part proved to be just what he thought, Prairie Outlaws, miscreants of all kinds, who associated with Indians and dressed like them. A greenhorn would have taken these men for Indians, but the experienced borderer was not deceived. There were no bows and arrows among them—conclusive evidence that they were not what their dress announced—for no prairie Indian ever gives up his bow, however well armed otherwise.

Down they came, yelling ferociously, and firing as they came, but the borderer merely laughed as the bullets whistled wildly round him. He put the mare to a smooth hand gallop, such as would hardly disturb his aim, and met his foes with a revolver in his hand. Then was seen the marvelous difference between his cool, collected firing, and the wild vagaries of his enemies. While their horses were plunging and kicking, and the bullets flying all round, some of them even wounding their own party, Wild Bill, eluding the rush of the enemy, and wheeling like a hawk on the wing, never fired a shot till he almost touched his opponent. And every shot of the six laid a man dead on the ground.

The seventh man fled in dismay, with Bill after him, and the swift mare caught up with the fugitive in half a dozen strides. A blow of the pistol-butt brought the man from his horse, and the borderer only halted long enough to reload his pistol, when away he went once more on the track of the enemy. There were only ten left, and all their horses were jaded. In twenty minutes more he was up with them, and charged with a pistol in each hand, for he saw in their midst the form of a woman, evidently a prisoner.

The combat was but a repetition of the other, one skillful shot and horseman overcoming ten blinders without receiving a scratch. Many may deem this incredible. To such we say, try to shoot at a target with a pistol, off a galloping horse, and you will see what the blunders did, and remember that Wild Bill sent every shot to its mark, at six feet distance.

Almost before it is told, the Prairie Outlaws were worsted and in full flight, Wild Bill leading back the maiden in triumph.

And such is the true and particular account of how Wild Bill won a wife, for Bella Sturges, having lost her father, mar-

ried her preserver a year after, and still lives to attest the truth of her rescue from the Prairie Outlaws.

Indian women, accustomed to hard labor in the open air, never compel a traveling party to stop more than three or four hours on the birth of a child. If left behind, they overtake the expedition the same evening or the next day, with the little new-comer strapped on the maternal back. They ride astride like men.

Their lodges, or *tepees*, are conical in form, twelve or fifteen feet high—usually made of buffalo robes with the fur inside, stretched around a circle of poles. These dwellings, ten or twelve feet in diameter, with a hole at the top for the escape of smoke, are warm in winter and cool in summer. The Sibley tent used in our army is modeled after a Sioux *tepee*.

In front of each lodge is hung the shield and quiver of the warrior. These shields, worn upon the left arm, are covered with antelope-skin or buffalo-hide stuffed with hair, and will usually ward off any rifle-bullet which does not strike them perpendicularly. The bows have great force, sometimes throwing an arrow quite through the body of a buffalo. In profound peace the Indians maintain all the system and precaution of an army in time of war. The life of the Sioux is simply a nomadic, never a settlement. The savages found on the Atlantic coast by pioneer settlers lived in permanent villages, cultivated corn, were without horses, hunted on foot, and seldom wandered far from home. The Western Indians all travel on horseback, taking their earthly possessions with them. At half an hour's notice they gather up all their goods, their wives and children, and start on a journey of hundreds of miles. Reaching their destination, they are entirely domesticated in another half-hour. They do not till the ground, except in few instances, but live exclusively on fresh meat, which they eat in enormous quantities.

Most of the Indian languages are very easy to acquire, though there are some exceptions. Dubray, an old trapper who had spent many years among the Indians, spoke the Arapaho language fluently, but he once said, "I lived among the Apaches eleven years, and only learned two of their words. I will pronounce them; and if you can repeat either immediately after hearing it, I will give you fifty dollars!" It could not be done.

Where a man of pure white blood marries a woman of Indian or half-breed, or vice versa, five of the children may be entirely white, with Saxon features, and a sixth will have unmixed Indian lineaments, with a skin as dusky as a Winnebago.

Infidelity to the marital relations is severely punished. The man is taken and stripped, and whipped as long as the ag-

cord. Sham battles are then fought in illustration of the manner in which the different trophies were acquired, the rehearsal reminding the *civilized* spectator of a theatrical representation, only that in this case the performance is more in earnest.

This examination gone through with, the lodge is then prepared for the medicine-men, prophets and dreamers to perform the ceremony of initiating a virtuous woman. The members of the conclave endure a total abstinence from food and water for seven days previous to the ceremony, unless any one faints from exhaustion, in which case some slight nourishment is given him.

The warriors are then drawn up in two lines, about four feet apart, facing inward, and the female candidate presents herself at the lodge door. She harangues them when she first presents herself, and then marches between the lines of dusky warriors. Here comes the fearful ordeal. If she has ever been guilty of any illicit action, her declaration of innocence is refuted by a dozen voices, and a thousand bullets riddle her body in a moment, and her flesh is hacked into morsels. This is the fearful war-path secret. After her harangue she passes between the lines of warriors to the sand. Taking a bowl, she dips a small quantity of sand, and returns with it to the lodge, and then makes two other trips for the wood and oil-chips. If she is so fortunate as to return the third time, she is received with applause by the multitude. The functionaries then pass their hands over her head, shoulders, and arms, extolling her good qualities and proclaiming that there is one virtuous woman in the nation. She is then presented with the medicine-shield by the great medicine-chief, to preserve and carry for him, and no one but he has authority to take it from her.

If the candidate is killed during the initiation ceremonies, nothing more is done in the same lodge; it is immediately torn down, and the tribe moves to some other place, where they build another lodge, and the same performances are again gone through with.

In the mean time, women are engaged in cooking and preparing a sumptuous feast of every thing in season. All kinds of meats and dried berries, variously cooked, are spread before the partakers, which includes all who can obtain seats, except the medicine-men, prophets, and dreamers. Their fast continues seven days, during which time their inspiration is continually moving them.

The dedication of a female to the service of the Great Spirit is a dangerous thing for a woman to attempt. Like all forms of imposture, it requires a peculiar talent and fitness in the candidate who seeks admission into the sacred lodge. The war-

rior is then presented with the medicine-shield by the great medicine-chief, to preserve and carry for him, and no one but he has authority to take it from her.